美味しんぼ

36

雁屋 哲・花咲アキラ

スピリッツコミックス好評発売中

美味しんぼ（雁屋哲・花咲アキラ）…1〜56集
神の左手悪魔の右手（楳図かずお）…1〜6集
男樹（本宮ひろ志）……全6巻
以蔵のキモチ（佐藤宏之）……1〜3集
14歳（楳図かずお）……全20巻
俺節（土田世紀）……全9巻
編集王（土田世紀）……1〜9集
ギャラリーフェイク（細野不二彦）…1〜8集
やったろうじゃん!!（原秀則）……1〜17集
ありがとう（山本直樹）……全4巻
東京大学物語（江川達也）……1〜13集
いいひと。（高橋しん）……1〜12集
月下の棋士（能條純一）……1〜12集
100億の男（国友やすゆき）……全12巻
Happy！（浦沢直樹）……1〜10集
奈緒子（坂田信弘・中原裕）……1〜7集
チューロウ（盛田賢司）……全2巻
今日子（家田荘子・池上遼一）……全2巻
アイ・ラブ・ユー（盛田賢司）……全3巻
星に願いを（古林仁史）……全1巻
愛しのアイリーン（新井英樹）……1〜4集

装丁／海野一雄
カバー・フォト／菊地和男、オリオンプレス

美味しんぼ
36
日米コメ戦争
作・雁屋 哲
画・花咲アキラ

小学館
BC2636

BIG COMICS

美味しんぼ 36

日米コメ戦争

作・雁屋哲　画・花咲アキラ

◆

小学館
BC2636

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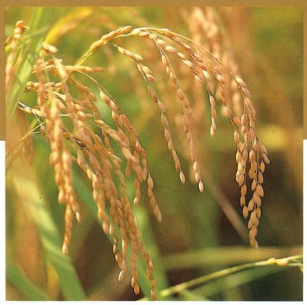


雁屋　哲 花咲アキラ 著作集

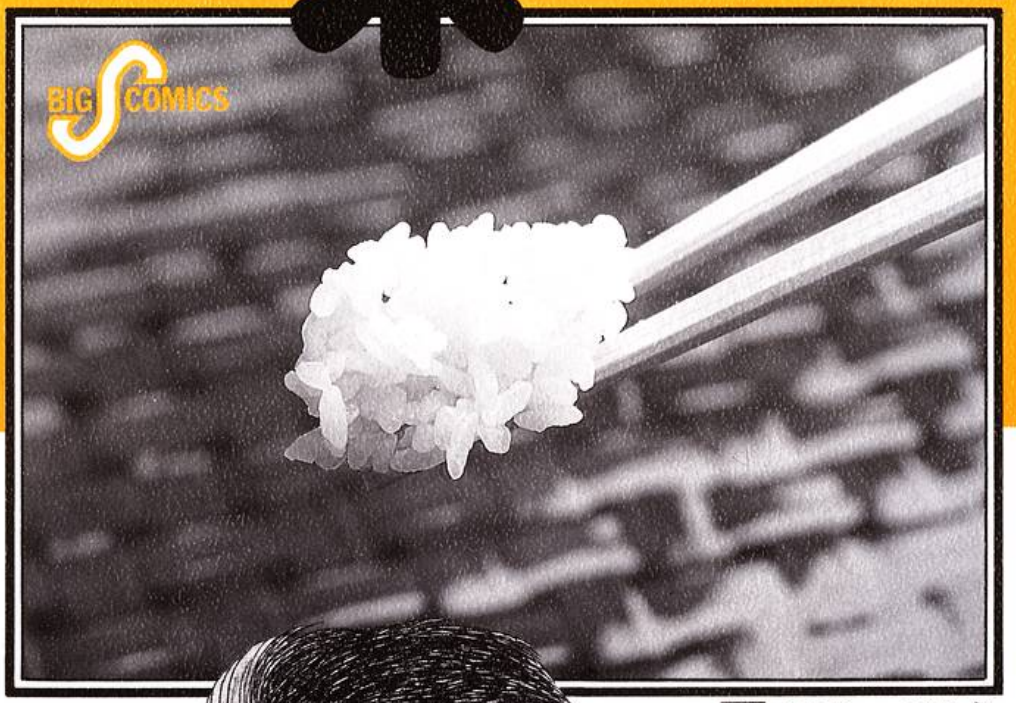
■ビッグコミックス

美味しんぼ……Ⅰ～56集発売中

■スピリッツコミックス好評発売中／■

YAWARA！（浦沢直樹）……全29巻
JIGORO！（浦沢直樹）……全１巻
めぞん一刻（高橋留美子）……全15巻
ＤＩＮＯ〈ディーノ〉（柳沢きみお）……全12巻
ヤングマン（六田登）……全８巻
Ｆ〈エフ〉（六田登）……全28巻
かぼちゃ白書（六田登・タモツ）……全１巻
Cryingフリーマン（小池一夫・池上遼一）…全９巻
トラキーヨ（吉田聡）……全６巻
ZERO（松本大洋）……全２巻
花男（松本大洋）……全３巻
ハーフな分だけ（星里もちる）……全２巻
りぴんぐゲーム（星里もちる）……全10巻
結婚しようよ（星里もちる）……全６巻
りざべーしょんプリーズ（細野不二彦）…全２巻
あどりぶシネ倶楽部（細野不二彦）……全１巻
うにばーしてぃBOYS（細野不二彦）…全１巻
美紅・舞子（西村しのぶ）……全１巻
ツルモク独身寮（窪之内英策）……全11巻
ワタナベ（窪之内英策）……全３巻
原色恋愛図鑑（松苗あけみ）……全１巻
青い春ー松本大洋短編集（松本大洋）…全１巻
10月の満月に一番近い土曜日（石渡治）…全１巻
僕らはみんな生きている（一色伸幸・山本直樹）…全４巻

美味(おい)しんぼ

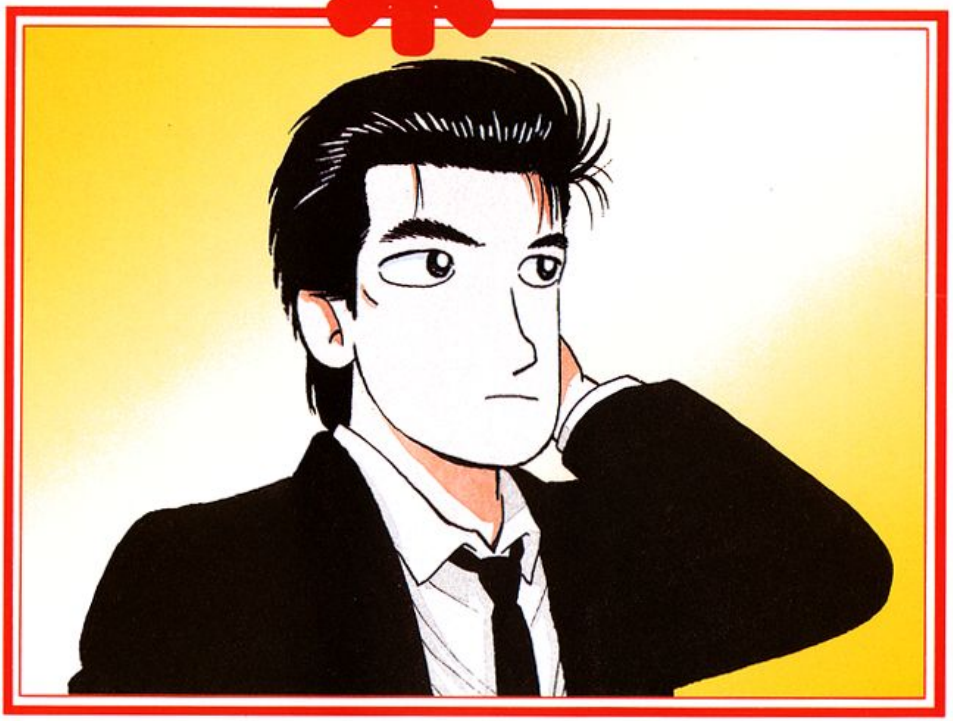


36 日米コメ戦争

作・雁屋 哲
画・花咲アキラ

36 日米コメ戦争

美味(おい)しんぼ



美味しんぼ

36 日米コメ戦争

第1話 キノコの真実……3
第2話 柚餅子の縁……25
第3話 魔法の毛抜き……47
第4話 年越し鴨南蛮……69
第5話 日米コメ戦争❶……91
日米コメ戦争❷……113
日米コメ戦争❸……135
日米コメ戦争❹……157
日米コメ戦争❺……180

第1話
キノコの真実

THE ME YOU SEE NOW, EATING THE 300-YEN SET A LUNCH IN THE EMPLOYEE CAFETERIA EVERY DAY, IS MERELY A DISGUISE TO CONCEAL MY TRUE IDENTITY—!
東西新聞社
LISTEN UP, YOU UNDERLINGS! SHOW ME SOME RESPECT!

SO, YOU'VE DECIDED TO BECOME THE NEWSPAPER KING.

I WILL MAKE MR. OHARA MY SUBORDINATE AND BECOME THE NEWSPAPER KING, REIGNING SUPREME OVER JAPAN'S NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY!
I'LL CONQUER THE WORLD! DEPARTMENT HEADS AND SECTION CHIEFS ARE NOTHING TO ME!

IS IT REALLY OKAY TO SAY THAT SECTION CHIEFS ARE NOTHING TO YOU?

2

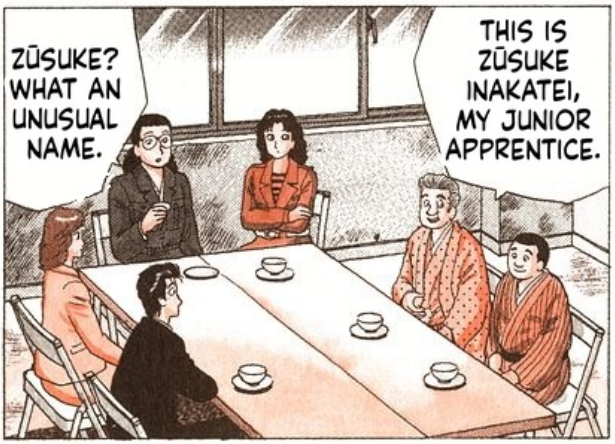
WRAP HIM IN NEWSPAPER AND PUT HIM OUT WITH THE BURNABLE TRASH!
TAKE THAT IDIOT KOIZUMI, ROLL HIM UP LIKE THIS, STOMP HIM INTO A MANGLED MESS, AND-

YOU DAMN FOOL! DO YOU THINK I'M SCARED OF A SECTION CHIEF? I'LL SAY WHATEVER I DAMN WELL PLEASE!

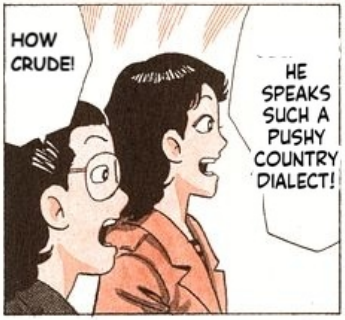
WHAT'S ALL THIS COMMOTION?
PILE ON A LITTLE MORE —IT'LL GET INTERESTING.
THAT'S PRETTY EXTREME.
W-WHAT?
OH! ISN'T THAT KOIZUMI? YOU CAME AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME!
ゴゴ
THIS IS BAD.
OH, DIRECTOR!
I JUST FINISHED WORKING OVERTIME, SO...
...
DAMN YOU! ARE YOU SAYING YOU CAN'T ACCEPT MY CUP?!
IF YOU WON'T DRINK, I'LL MAKE YOU DRINK!
KOIZUMI-SAN, GET OVER HERE AND HAVE A DRINK AND MAYBE YOU WON'T BE SUCH A STICK IN THE MUD!
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, YOU MUSTN'T...
3
YOU FOOL!
Y-YOU...

PLEASE, STOP!
TOMII-SAN!
ゴボゲ
COME ON! DRINK UP!
TOZAI NEWS
BRING ME YOUR RESIGNATION TOMORROW!
TOMII! YOU'RE FIRED!
I APOLOGIZED PROFUSELY, BUT THE DIRECTOR SIMPLY REFUSES TO FORGIVE YOU.
THIS IS AWFUL...
TH... THEN WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO...
SO I'M REALLY FIRED...
.....

AND WITH HIS DRINKING PROBLEM BEING THAT BAD, THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT HE MIGHT DO NEXT. FROM THE COMPANY'S PERSPECTIVE, IT'S SAFER TO FIRE HIM.
WELL, ASSAULTING AN EXECUTIVE IS CERTAINLY UNACCEPTABLE.
THERE'S STILL NO NEED TO GIVE UP. I'LL DO EVERYTHING I CAN, TOO.
HELLO THERE.
YOU HEARTLESS BASTARD!
MR. YAMAOKA! HOW CAN YOU SAY SUCH A THING?
ひぃ!
5
IT'S ALL RIGHT, MR. BLACK. THIS IS A GOOD CHANCE TO TAKE YOUR MIND OFF THINGS. SHALL WE HAVE SOME TEA?
SHALL I COME BACK ANOTHER TIME?
WELL NOW... LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING.
OH, MR. BLACK, LONG TIME NO SEE.


ZŪSUKE? WHAT AN UNUSUAL NAME.
THIS IS ZŪSUKE INAKATEI, MY JUNIOR APPRENTICE.

会議室


HOW CRUDE!
HE SPEAKS SUCH A PUSHY COUNTRY DIALECT!

ズーズー弁
YES, WELL, I COME FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE AND CAN'T SEEM TO SHAKE THIS ACCENT.

COULD YOU PLEASE PUT ME THROUGH TO YOUR COMPANY'S DIRECTOR KOIZUMI?
TO THE DIRECTOR? WHY?

HE MEANS NO HARM AT ALL.
NO, NO, THIS SORT OF THING IS JUST A BIT OF RAKUGO HUMOR.

6

ACTUALLY...

AND WHAT DOES MR. ZŪSUKE WANT?

THE OTHER DAY, I WAS BOOKED TO PERFORM AT A PRINTERS' COMPANY BANQUET, SO I BROUGHT ZŪSUKE ALONG TO HELP ME, AND WE PUT ON A RAKUGO PERFORMANCE...

I'D HEARD ABOUT YOU FROM OUR YAMAOKA, BUT MASTER BLACK, YOU'RE MORE SKILLED THAN ANY JAPANESE RAKUGO PERFORMER.
THAT WAS REALLY ENTERTAINING.

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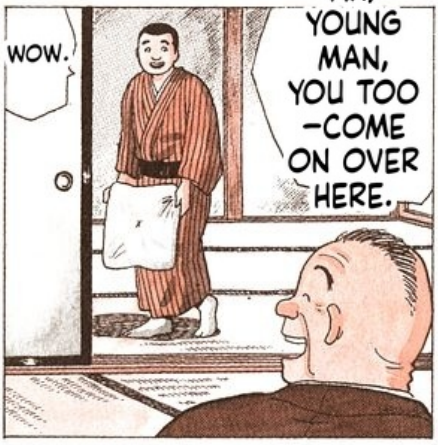
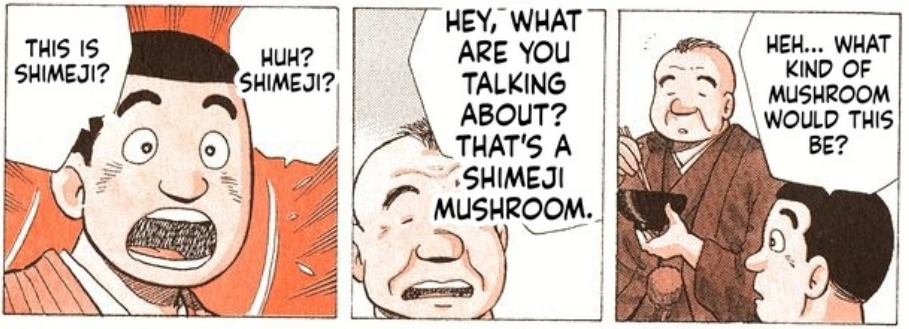

WOW.
AH, YOUNG MAN, YOU TOO —COME ON OVER HERE.

COME ALONG, MASTER BLACK. JOIN US.

THEN I'LL GLADLY TAKE YOU UP ON THAT.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

I'LL POLISH OFF THE WHOLE LOT, I WILL.
HEY THERE, SIR! WHEN IT COMES TO BOOZE AND FOOD, LEAVE IT TO ME.
HEY, ZŪSUKE, THOSE ARE THE MASTER'S ORDERS. IF YOU DON'T DRINK EVERY LAST DROP AND EAT EVERY LAST MORSEL, YOU'LL GET A FIVE-INCH NAIL THROUGH YOUR NAVEL.
HAHAHAHA, 'NOTHING' IS 'NASSHING,' HUH? GOOD FOR YOU.
COMPARED TO THAT, HIS ACCENT IS NOTHING.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I'VE HAD PLENTY OF TROUBLE EVEN NOW WITH MY AMERICAN ACCENT.
HE'S GOT QUITE AN ACCENT.
NOW, NOW, MASTER, THAT YOUNG FELLOW'S SPEECH WON'T DO.
8
OH! HOW KIND OF YOU. DON'T HOLD BACK— DIG IN.
MUCH OBLIGED —I'LL HAVE IT.
A BOWL OF MUSHROOM SOUP.

?
HEY, ZŪSUKE, WHY ARE YOU COCKING YOUR HEAD EVERY TIME YOU SEE A MUSHROOM?


THIS IS SHIMEJI?
HUH? SHIMEJI?
HEY, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THAT'S A SHIMEJI MUSHROOM.
HEH... WHAT KIND OF MUSHROOM WOULD THIS BE?

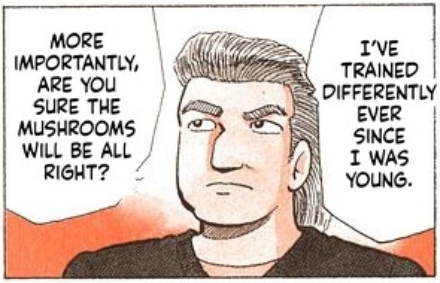
YOU MUST HAVE COME FROM A TERRIBLY RURAL PLACE.
ははは
GOOD HEAVENS, BACK HOME... I- I MEAN, IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, I WAS QUITE GOOD AT PICKING SHIMEJI MUSHROOMS. I DID IT OFTEN, BUT...
GOOD GRIEF, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT SHIMEJI ARE?
わはは
SHIMEJI MUSHROOMS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE MUST LOOK ABSOLUTELY BIZARRE.
I'VE NEVER SEEN A SHIMEJI LIKE THIS.

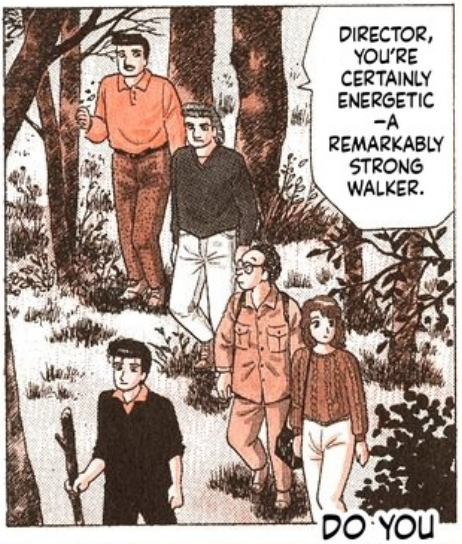
THIS ISN'T A NAMEKO.
A NAMEKO MUSHROOM IS SUPPOSED TO BE BIGGER AND FLATTER THAN THIS.
DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE NEVER SEEN A NAMEKO LIKE THIS IN YOUR HOMETOWN.
THEN HOW ABOUT THIS?
I'LL WRITE ABOUT YOU, ZŪSUKE.
ACTUALLY, I HAVE TO WRITE AN ESSAY FOR A MAGAZINE, BUT I'VE JUST DECIDED WHAT TO WRITE ABOUT.
HUH?
JUST WHAT KIND OF BACKWATER DID YOU COME FROM?
わはは
WELL, I'LL BE DAMNED! A NAMEKO THAT'S BIG AND FLAT? THAT'D BE A MONSTER!
NO, I...
'A NAMEKO MUSHROOM IS SUPPOSED TO BE BIGGER AND FLATTER THAN THIS'—THAT'LL GET A LAUGH.
HA HA HA!
'I'VE NEVER SEEN A SHIMEJI LIKE THIS BEFORE' IS FUNNY TOO.
ACCENT IS FUNNY, BUT HAVING THAT COUNTRY BOY ENCOUNTER A MUSHROOM IN TOKYO FOR THE FIRST TIME—ONE HE'S NEVER SEEN BEFORE—AND SAY SOMETHING COMPLETELY ABSURD IS A MASTERPIECE.
EVEN JUST THE STORY OF A YOUNG MAN WHO CAME FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE TO BECOME A RAKUGO PERFORMER AND IS WORKING DESPERATELY TO CORRECT HIS

わはは
……
KOIZUMI, IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'LL BE ABLE TO WRITE AN INTERESTING ESSAY.
I'M GLAD WE HAD ZŪSUKE COME IN TODAY.
I'LL HAVE TO SPLIT THE MANUSCRIPT FEE WITH ZŪSUKE.
PLEASE LOOK FORWARD TO IT.
SO I CAME TO ASK THE BUREAU CHIEF NOT TO WRITE ABOUT ZŪSUKE AND THE MUSHROOMS...
OH, IS THAT SO...
I WANTED TO BECOME A RAKUGO PERFORMER, AND I WORKED DESPERATELY TO GET RID OF MY COUNTRY ACCENT FOR THAT PURPOSE, BUT...
RAKUGO IS FOUNDED ON THE CULTURE AND TRADITIONS OF EDO AND TOKYO.
THE ACCENT WASN'T THE ONLY PROBLEM.
NO! OVER SOMETHING AS TRIVIAL AS MUSHROOMS!
ZŪSUKE SAYS HE'S QUITTING RAKUGO AND GOING BACK TO THE COUNTRYSIDE.
11
IT WASN'T JUST ABOUT THE MUSHROOMS...

IF I MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH WITH WIT, THAT'S ONE THING —BUT BEING LAUGHED AT FOR SAYING IGNORANT, IDIOTIC THINGS WOULD BE UTTERLY HUMILIATING.
BUT I'VE REALIZED CLEARLY THAT A SUPERFICIAL, LAST-MINUTE FIX WON'T DO.
I'M QUITTING RAKUGO.
THAT'S NOT TRUE. YOU STUDIED EDO CULTURE MORE THAN ANYONE IN THE RAKUGO WORLD —ENOUGH TO BE CONSIDERED NUMBER ONE.
EVEN WHEN IT COMES TO SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS FOOD, IT SHOWS THAT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND TOKYO CULTURE.
TO RUIN THE FUTURES OF TWO PEOPLE LIKE THAT IS JUST TOO CRUEL.
THE DIRECTOR HAS GONE TOO FAR. SHE FIRED ASSISTANT DIRECTOR TOMII AND CRUSHED ZŪSUKE-SAN'S DREAM.
WHAT?! REALLY?!
YAMAOKA-SAN!
LEAVE IT TO ME. NEITHER DEPUTY DIRECTOR TOMII NOR ZŪSUKE-SAN HAS ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT OVER THE YEARS. I'LL BE LEAVING THE COMPANY AT THE END OF THIS MONTH.
I SEE. WELL, TAKE CARE AND KEEP DOING YOUR BEST.
I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE FOR ME UNTIL NOW...
THANK YOU VERY MUCH. WELL, I'LL BE GOING NOW.
13
I HEARD YOU WERE GOING TO WRITE ESSAYS.
THEN, I'LL BE OFF.
I'M GOING MUSHROOM-PICKING WITH YAMAOKA AND THE OTHERS AS A FAREWELL
TRIP, BUT I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO SEE WHERE SHIMEJI AND NAMEKO MUSHROOMS GROW AT LEAST ONCE, DIRECTOR...
WHAT?


MORE IMPORTANTLY, ARE YOU SURE THE MUSHROOMS WILL BE ALL RIGHT?
I'VE TRAINED DIFFERENTLY EVER SINCE I WAS YOUNG.


DIRECTOR, YOU'RE CERTAINLY ENERGETIC —A REMARKABLY STRONG WALKER.

YES, I HEAR A MUSHROOM-HUNTING EXPERT IS WAITING FOR US.

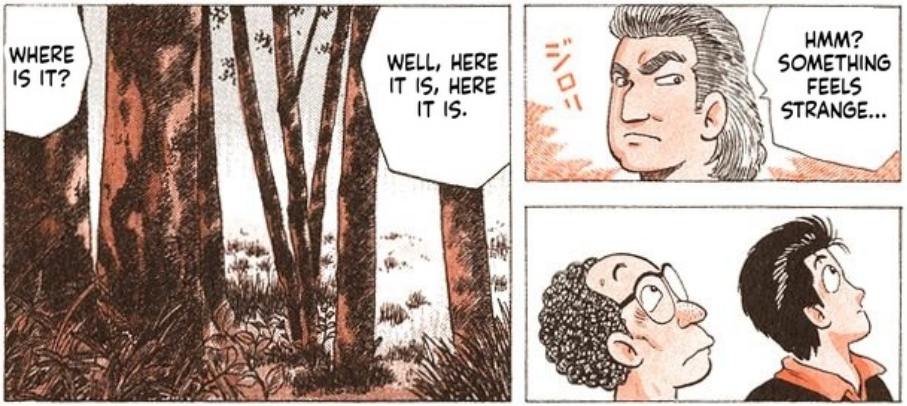
14

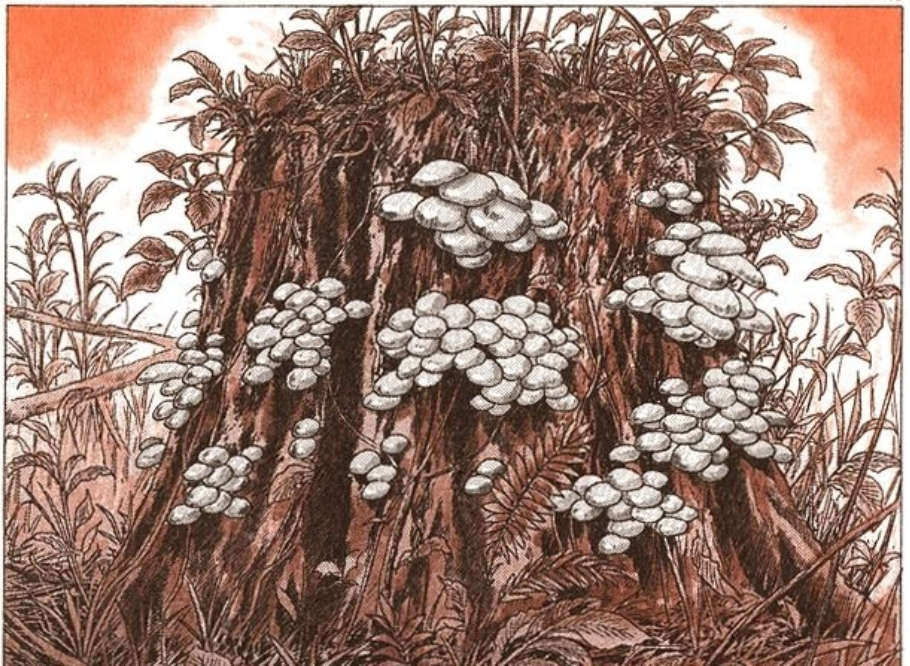
AH, YES...

DON'T WORRY SO MUCH.
WELL, WE'VE GOT NOTHING TO LOSE.

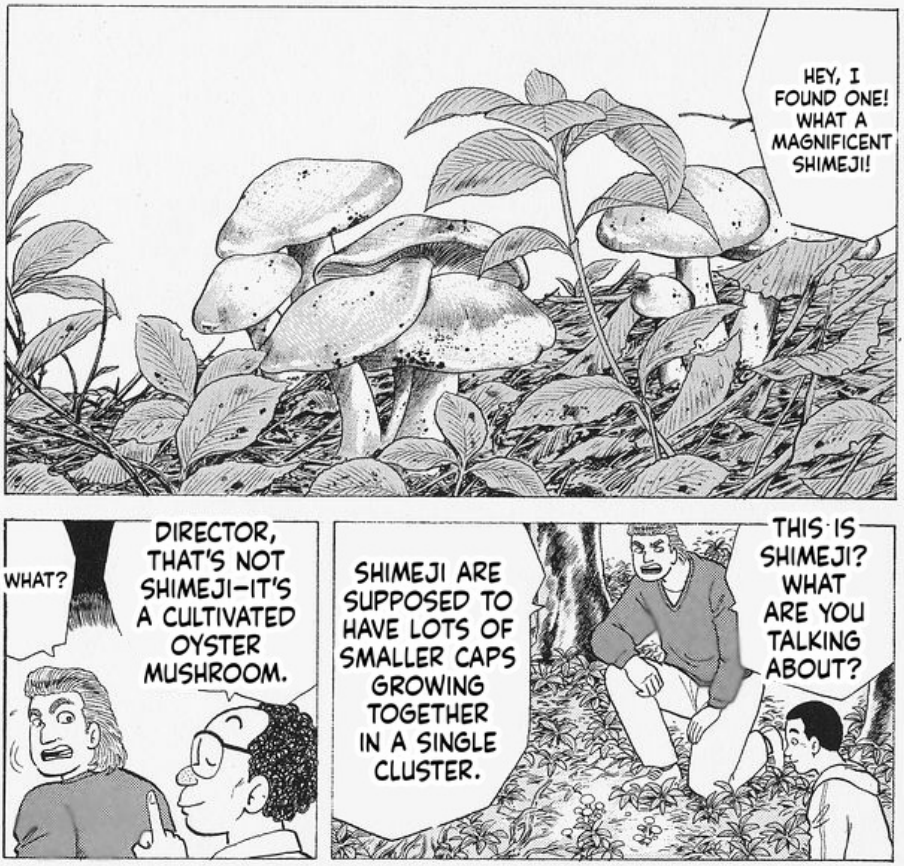
DO YOU REALLY THINK THIS IS GOING TO WORK?

I'M ZŪSUKE OF THE INAKATEI INN.
I KNOW YOU...
WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.
HEY THERE, GUYS!


WHERE IS IT?
WELL, HERE IT IS, HERE IT IS.
ニヤリ
HMM? SOMETHING FEELS STRANGE...

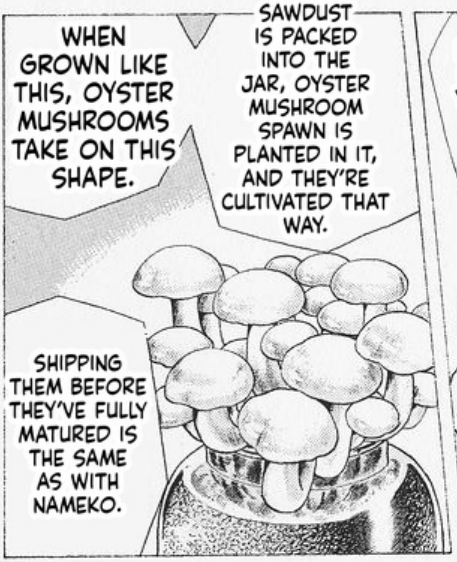


IT'S NAMEKO.
WHAT KIND OF MUSHROOM IS THIS?
OH, THEY'RE GROWING ALL OVER THE STUMP!
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS. THERE CAN'T BE NAMEKO THIS BIG AND FLAT.
MOST OF THOSE ARE CULTIVATED, TOO. YOU CAN HARDLY FIND WILD NAMEKO LIKE THESE IN TOKYO.
WHAT?
CHIEF, THE NAMEKO MUSHROOMS AVAILABLE IN TOKYO ARE ONES PICKED BEFORE THEIR CAPS OPEN—IN OTHER WORDS, THEY'RE STILL IN THE BUD STAGE.
THE SURFACE IS SLIMY AND STICKY, BUT NOT AS MUCH AS THE BUD-STAGE NAMEKO.
16
U-UHM... IS THIS WHAT REAL NAMEKO LOOKS LIKE...?
I'D ONLY EVER EATEN NAMEKO WITH THEIR CAPS ALREADY OPEN.


HEY, I FOUND ONE! WHAT A MAGNIFICENT SHIMEJI!
WHAT?
DIRECTOR, THAT'S NOT SHIMEJI—IT'S A CULTIVATED OYSTER MUSHROOM.
SHIMEJI ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE LOTS OF SMALLER CAPS GROWING TOGETHER IN A SINGLE CLUSTER.
THIS IS SHIMEJI? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
17
YOU'RE IN LUCK—THERE ARE OYSTER MUSHROOMS OVER THERE TOO.

BUT THEIR SHAPES ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT!
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS. YOU SAID THAT WHAT I THOUGHT WERE SHIMEJI ARE ACTUALLY OYSTER MUSHROOMS.

U-UH, UGH... HOW COULD THIS BE...
TO THINK THAT WHAT'S BEING SOLD AS SHIMEJI IS ACTUALLY OYSTER MUSHROOMS...

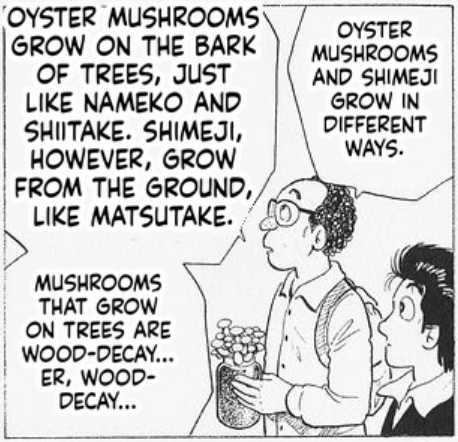

WHEN GROWN LIKE THIS, OYSTER MUSHROOMS TAKE ON THIS SHAPE.
SAWDUST IS PACKED INTO THE JAR, OYSTER MUSHROOM SPAWN IS PLANTED IN IT, AND THEY'RE CULTIVATED THAT WAY.
SHIPPING THEM BEFORE THEY'VE FULLY MATURED IS THE SAME AS WITH NAMEKO.

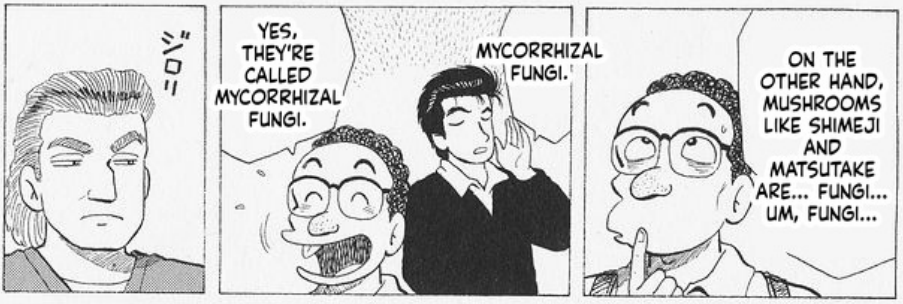
DIRECTOR, THIS IS THE SHIMEJI YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, ISN'T IT?

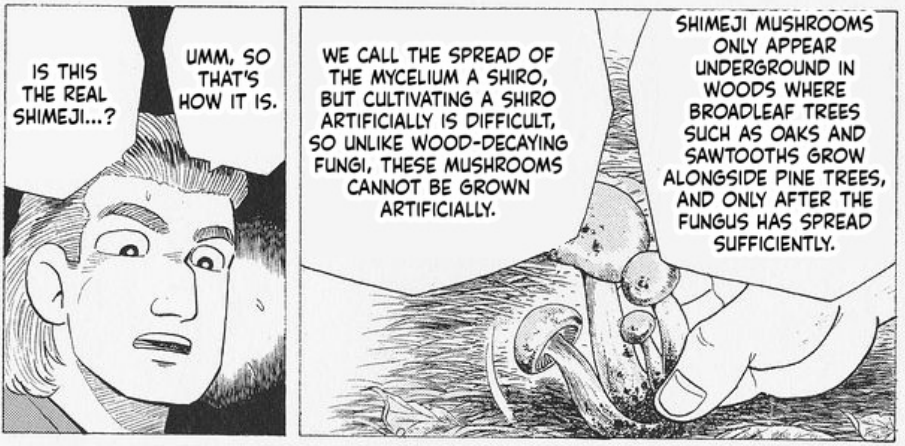
WOOD-DECAY FUNGI.

18

THEY DECOMPOSE DEAD WOOD AND GROW BY USING IT AS NOURISHMENT.
EXACTLY. THEY'RE CALLED WOOD-DECAY FUNGI.


OYSTER MUSHROOMS GROW ON THE BARK OF TREES, JUST LIKE NAMEKO AND SHIITAKE. SHIMEJI, HOWEVER, GROW FROM THE GROUND, LIKE MATSUTAKE.
MUSHROOMS THAT GROW ON TREES ARE WOOD-DECAY... ER, WOOD-DECAY...
OYSTER MUSHROOMS AND SHIMEJI GROW IN DIFFERENT WAYS.


ジロ
YES, THEY'RE CALLED MYCORRHIZAL FUNGI.
MYCORRHIZAL FUNGI.
ON THE OTHER HAND, MUSHROOMS LIKE SHIMEJI AND MATSUTAKE ARE... FUNGI... UM, FUNGI...


IS THIS THE REAL SHIMEJI...?
UMM, SO THAT'S HOW IT IS.
WE CALL THE SPREAD OF THE MYCELIUM A SHIRO, BUT CULTIVATING A SHIRO ARTIFICIALLY IS DIFFICULT, SO UNLIKE WOOD-DECAYING FUNGI, THESE MUSHROOMS CANNOT BE GROWN ARTIFICIALLY.
SHIMEJI MUSHROOMS ONLY APPEAR UNDERGROUND IN WOODS WHERE BROADLEAF TREES SUCH AS OAKS AND SAWTOOTHS GROW ALONGSIDE PINE TREES, AND ONLY AFTER THE FUNGUS HAS SPREAD SUFFICIENTLY.

19

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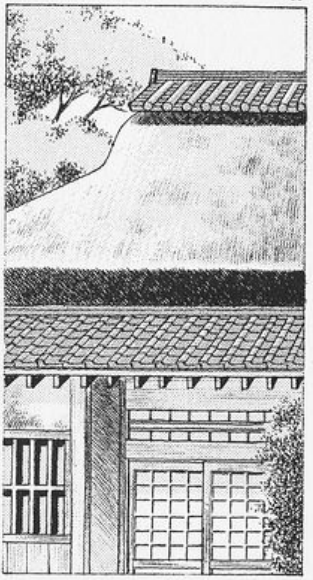
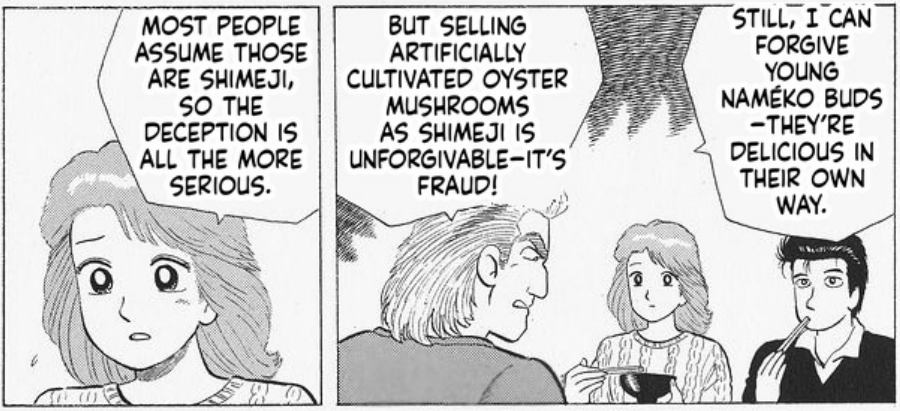
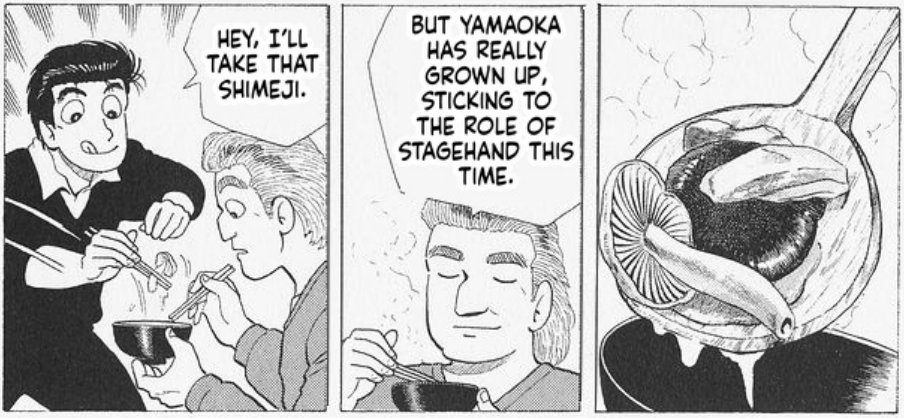


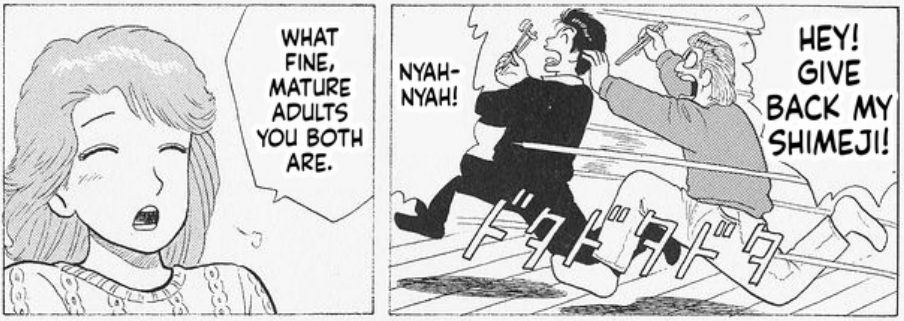
THEY SAY MATSUTAKE FOR AROMA, SHIMEJI FOR FLAVOR, AND NOW I FINALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT-THAT MEANS!
SO THIS IS THE TRUE TASTE OF SHIMEJI!
ガ"ッ
ガ"ッ
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? A LUXURIOUS MUSHROOM HOT POT LIKE THIS WOULD BE NOTHING BUT A PIPE DREAM IN TOKYO.
EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE ALWAYS LOOKING AFTER OUR SON, I'M SORRY TO OFFER YOU SOMETHING SO HUMBLE.
THE NAMÉKO, GROWN TO JUST THE RIGHT SIZE, IS A WORLD APART FROM THE YOUNG BUDS IN BOTH AROMA AND FLAVOR!
THE NAMÉKO WE USUALLY EAT NEVER SEEMED PARTICULARLY FLAVORFUL, BUT...
HAH! SO THIS IS WHAT NAMÉKO ARE REALLY LIKE!

20


MOST PEOPLE ASSUME THOSE ARE SHIMEJI, SO THE DECEPTION IS ALL THE MORE SERIOUS.
BUT SELLING ARTIFICIALLY CULTIVATED OYSTER MUSHROOMS AS SHIMEJI IS UNFORGIVABLE—IT'S FRAUD!
STILL, I CAN FORGIVE YOUNG NAMÉKO BUDS —THEY'RE DELICIOUS IN THEIR OWN WAY.

PLEASE FORGIVE ME, ZUUSUKE.
GOOD GRIEF, I'M ASHAMED THAT I LAUGHED AT YOU, ZUUSUKE, WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING MUCH ABOUT MUSHROOMS. I ALMOST WROTE A STRANGE ESSAY.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
WHAT'S WORSE IS THAT OYSTER MUSHROOMS ARE DELICIOUS IN THEIR OWN RIGHT, SO THEY SHOULD BE SOLD UNDER THEIR PROPER NAME, OPENLY AND HONESTLY.
ABSOLUTELY. IT'S FOOLISH TO CAUSE UNNECESSARY CONFUSION BY GIVING MUSHROOMS MISLEADING NAMES.
OH, MY....
ZUUSUKE, AT THIS RATE YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO QUIT BEING A STORYTELLER UNTIL YOU DIE.
WHAT?! A SUPPORT ASSOCIATION?!
WORK HARD SO YOU CAN BECOME A HEADLINER SOON.
TO THANK YOU, LET'S ESTABLISH A ZUUSUKE INAKATEI SUPPORT ASSOCIATION. I'LL BE THE CHAIRMAN.
I'LL LEAVE THE DECISION ABOUT FIRING HIM TO TANIMURA.
HIS DRINKING HABITS ARE TERRIBLE, BUT SEEING HOW DEVOTED HIS SUBORDINATES ARE, PERHAPS HE DOES HAVE A GOOD SIDE.
あっあっ
DIRECTOR -!
I'VE DECIDED TO HAVE DEPUTY DIVISION CHIEF TOMII SERVE AS THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF YOUR SUPPORT ASSOCIATION.
21
GAH! THEN I'M NOT FIRED...?

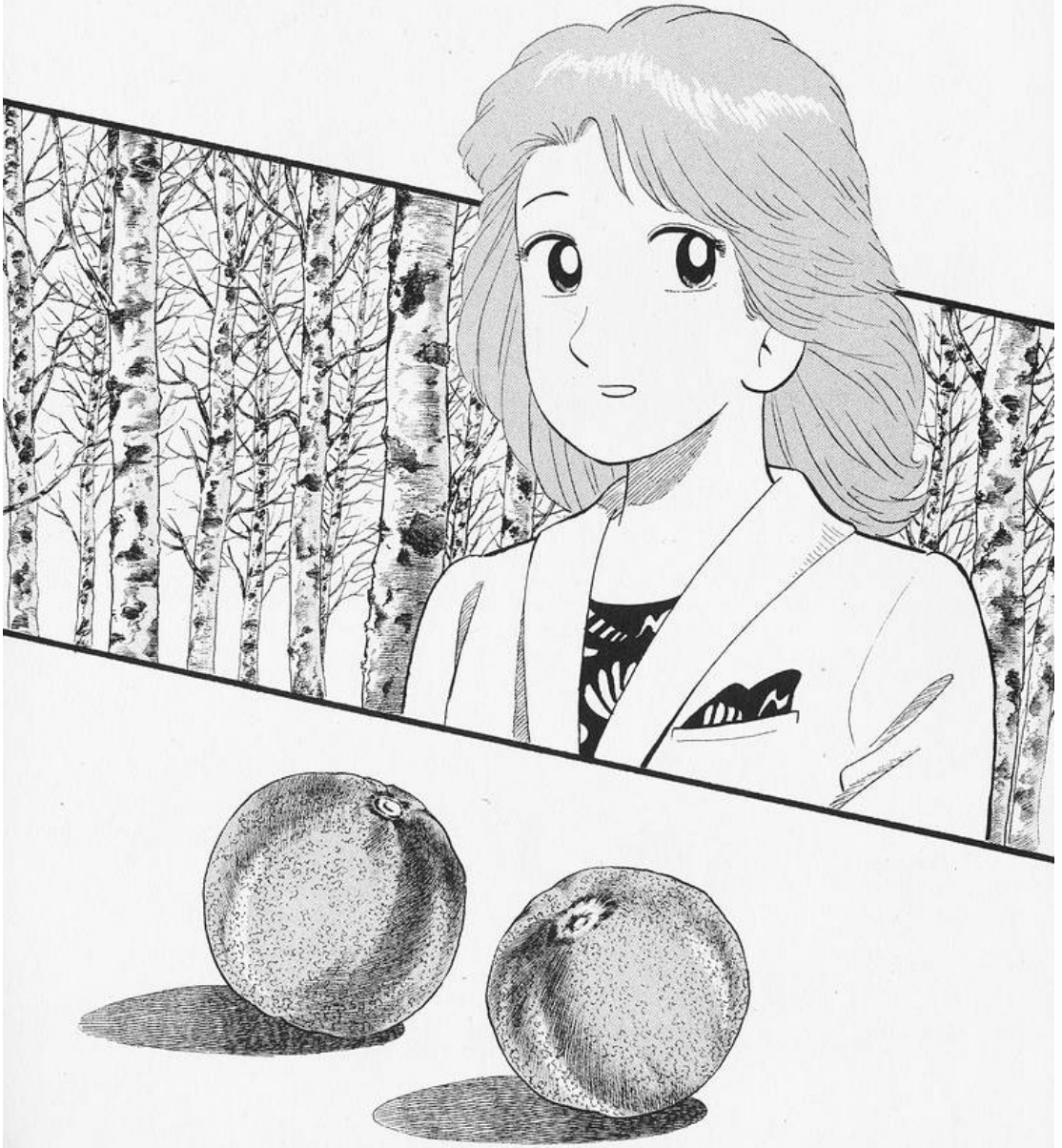

HEY, I'LL TAKE THAT SHIMEJI.
BUT YAMAOKA HAS REALLY GROWN UP, STICKING TO THE ROLE OF STAGEHAND THIS TIME.


WHAT FINE, MATURE ADULTS YOU BOTH ARE.
NYAH-NYAH!
HEY! GIVE BACK MY SHIMEJI!

22

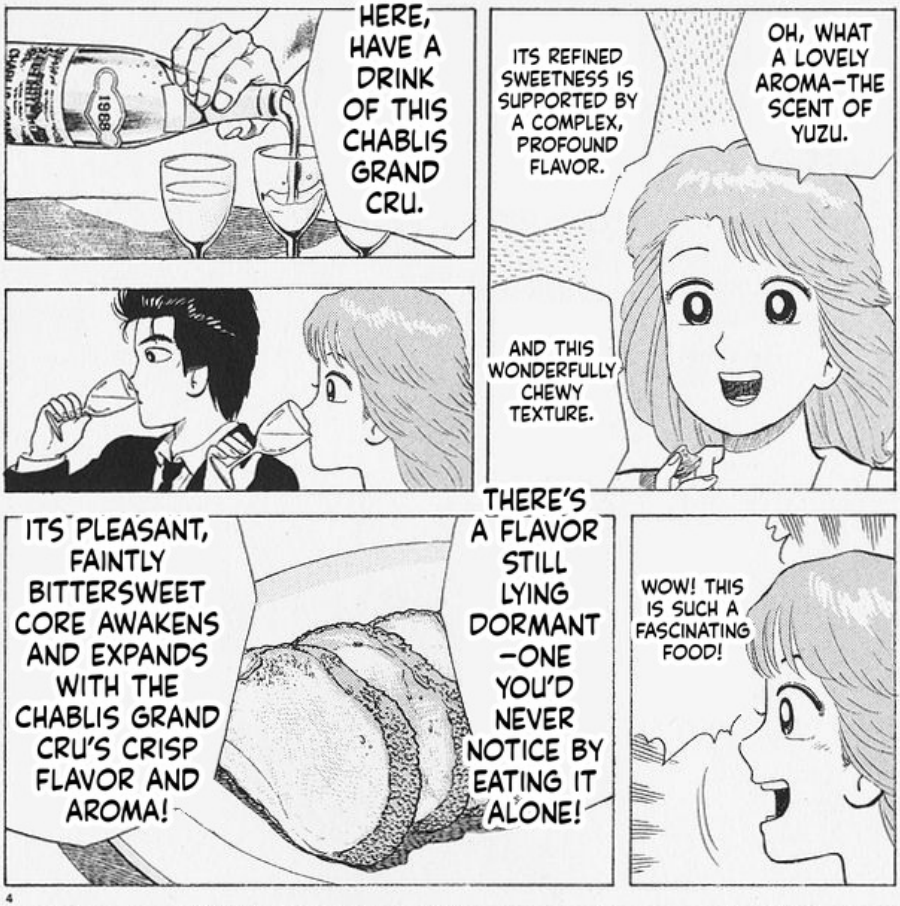
ALL RIGHT, LOOKS LIKE THAT'S A WRAP.
THAT'S A TERRIBLE JOKE!
YEAH, THEY'RE BOTH WEARING MUSHROOMS ON THEIR HEADS BECAUSE THEY WANTED TO HOG ALL THE SHIMEJI FOR THEMSELVES.

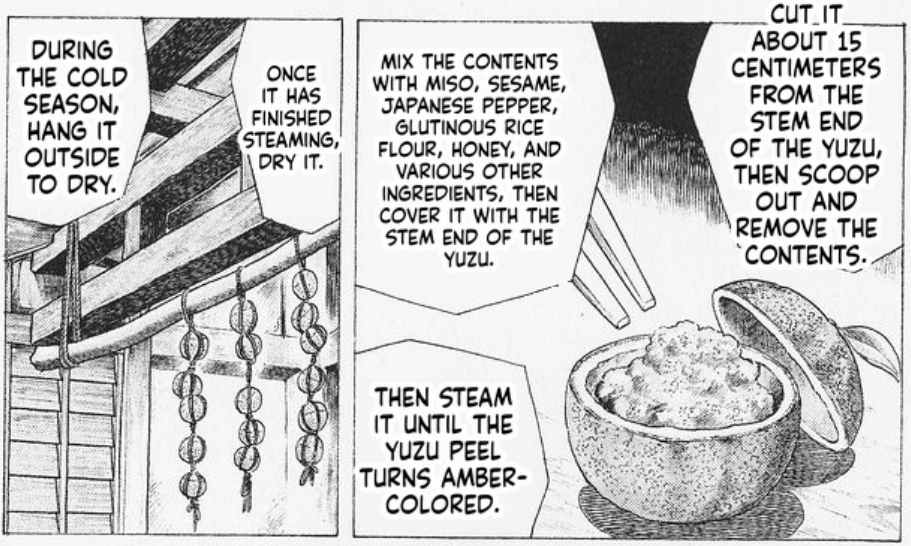
第2話
柚餅子の縁

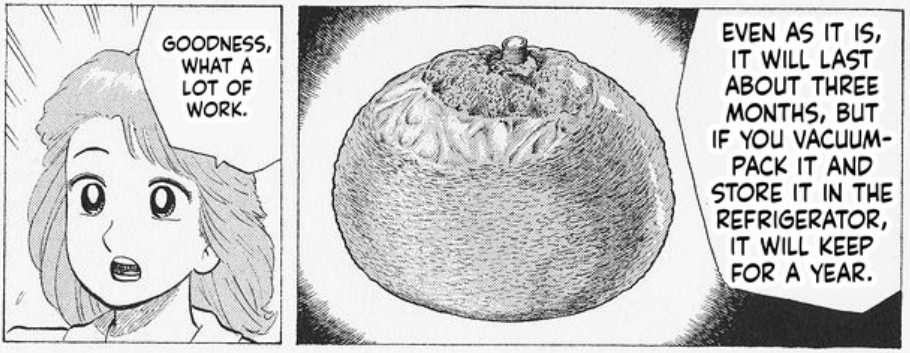


*TL NOTE: THE TALE OF TARO URASHIMA IS ABOUT A FRIENDLY FISHERMAN THAT SAVES A SEA TURTLE FROM CRUEL CHILDREN AND THEN TRAVELS TO AN UNDERSEA DRAGON PALACE AS A REWARD AND WHEN HE RETURNS, FINDS THAT CENTURIES HAVE PASSED.

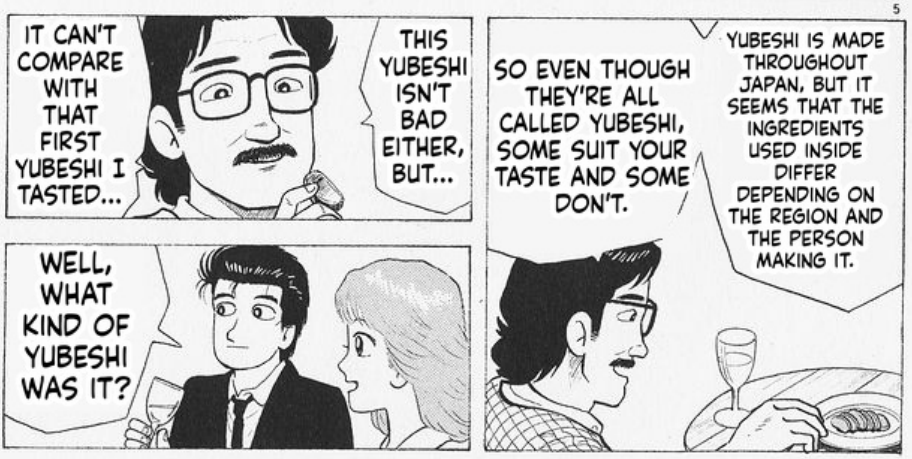
I WONDER WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO TREAT US TO.
YES, THAT'S IT—I'LL TREAT YOU ALL TO SOMETHING GOOD.
DON'T BE SO EXTRAVAGANT.
I WISH HE'D TREAT US TO SOMETHING UNUSUAL FROM FRANCE INSTEAD.
HM, JUDGING BY THE NAME, IT SOUNDS LIKE JAPANESE FOOD.
3
WELL, WHAT COULD THIS BE...?
THIS GOES EXTREMELY WELL WITH DRY WHITE WINE.
COME ON, GIVE IT A TRY.

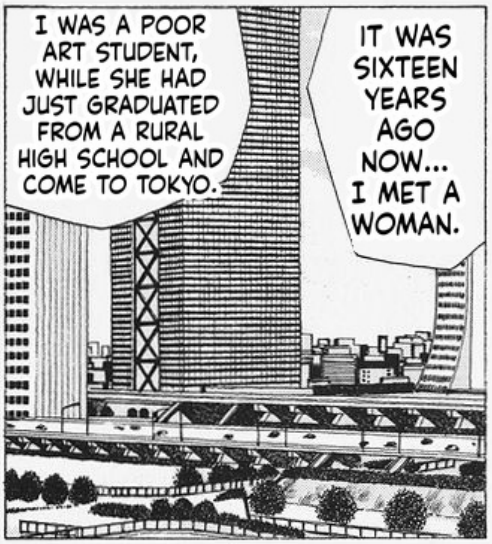

HERE, HAVE A DRINK OF THIS CHABLIS GRAND CRU.
1988
OH, WHAT A LOVELY AROMA—THE SCENT OF YUZU.
ITS REFINED SWEETNESS IS SUPPORTED BY A COMPLEX, PROFOUND FLAVOR.
AND THIS WONDERFULLY CHEWY TEXTURE.
ITS PLEASANT, FAINTLY BITTERSWEET CORE AWAKENS AND EXPANDS WITH THE CHABLIS GRAND CRU'S CRISP FLAVOR AND AROMA!
THERE'S A FLAVOR STILL LYING DORMANT —ONE YOU'D NEVER NOTICE BY EATING IT ALONE!
WOW! THIS IS SUCH A FASCINATING FOOD!
4
HOW DO YOU MAKE YUBESHI?
I HAD NO IDEA YUBESHI PAIRED SO WELL WITH WINE.
OH! YOU REALLY UNDERSTAND IT.
THAT'S ALSO EXCEPTIONALLY WELL MADE.
THIS IS YUBESHI, ISN'T IT?


DURING THE COLD SEASON, HANG IT OUTSIDE TO DRY.
ONCE IT HAS FINISHED STEAMING, DRY IT.
CUT IT ABOUT 15 CENTIMETERS FROM THE STEM END OF THE YUZU, THEN SCOOP OUT AND REMOVE THE CONTENTS.
MIX THE CONTENTS WITH MISO, SESAME, JAPANESE PEPPER, GLUTINOUS RICE FLOUR, HONEY, AND VARIOUS OTHER INGREDIENTS, THEN COVER IT WITH THE STEM END OF THE YUZU.
THEN STEAM IT UNTIL THE YUZU PEEL TURNS AMBER-COLORED.


GOODNESS, WHAT A LOT OF WORK.
EVEN AS IT IS, IT WILL LAST ABOUT THREE MONTHS, BUT IF YOU VACUUM-PACK IT AND STORE IT IN THE REFRIGERATOR, IT WILL KEEP FOR A YEAR.

5


IT CAN'T COMPARE WITH THAT FIRST YUBESHI I TASTED...
THIS YUBESHI ISN'T BAD EITHER, BUT...
WELL, WHAT KIND OF YUBESHI WAS IT?
SO EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE ALL CALLED YUBESHI, SOME SUIT YOUR TASTE AND SOME DON'T.
YUBESHI IS MADE THROUGHOUT JAPAN, BUT IT SEEMS THAT THE INGREDIENTS USED INSIDE DIFFER DEPENDING ON THE REGION AND THE PERSON MAKING IT.

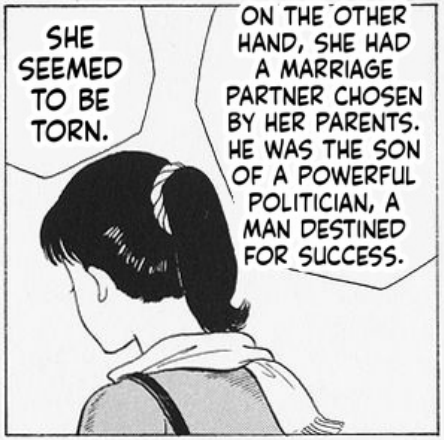

I WAS A POOR ART STUDENT, WHILE SHE HAD JUST GRADUATED FROM A RURAL HIGH SCHOOL AND COME TO TOKYO.
IT WAS SIXTEEN YEARS AGO NOW... I MET A WOMAN.

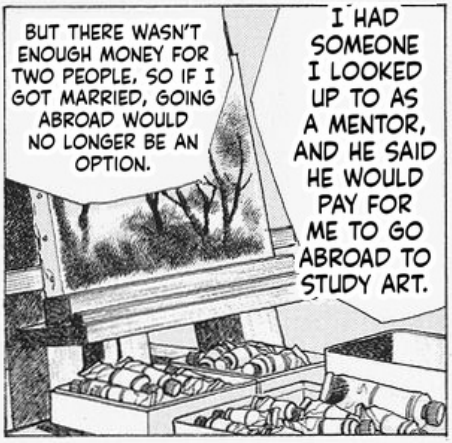
I'M FINDING MYSELF WANTING TO TELL AN OLD STORY...
HEHE...

BUT THERE WAS A PROBLEM.

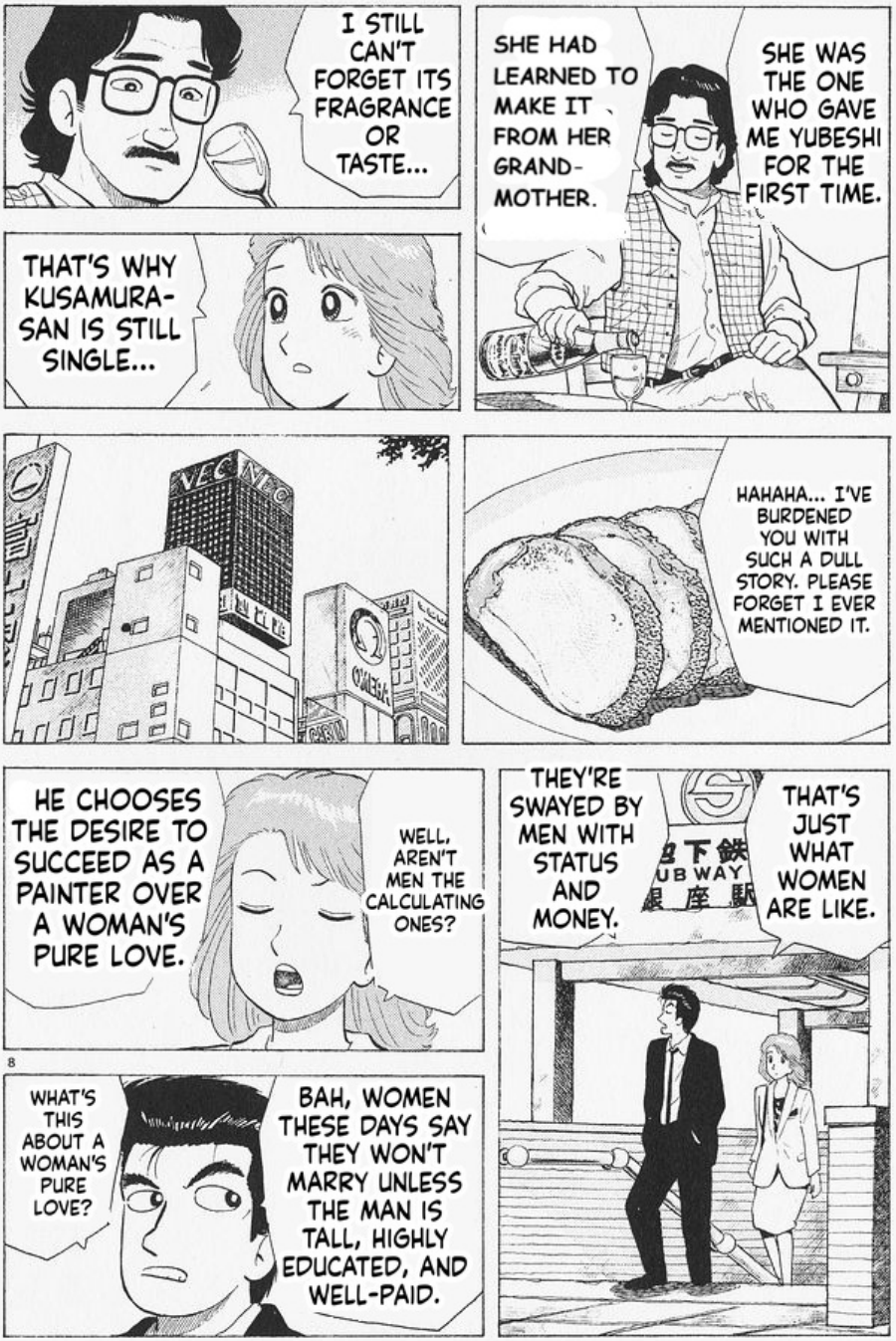
FOR SOME REASON, SHE TOOK A LIKING TO ME TOO, AND THE TWO OF US FELL IN LOVE.
SHE WAS PURE AND BEAUTIFUL, YET STRONG-WILLED AND DECISIVE, AND I WAS INSTANTLY CAPTIVATED BY HER.

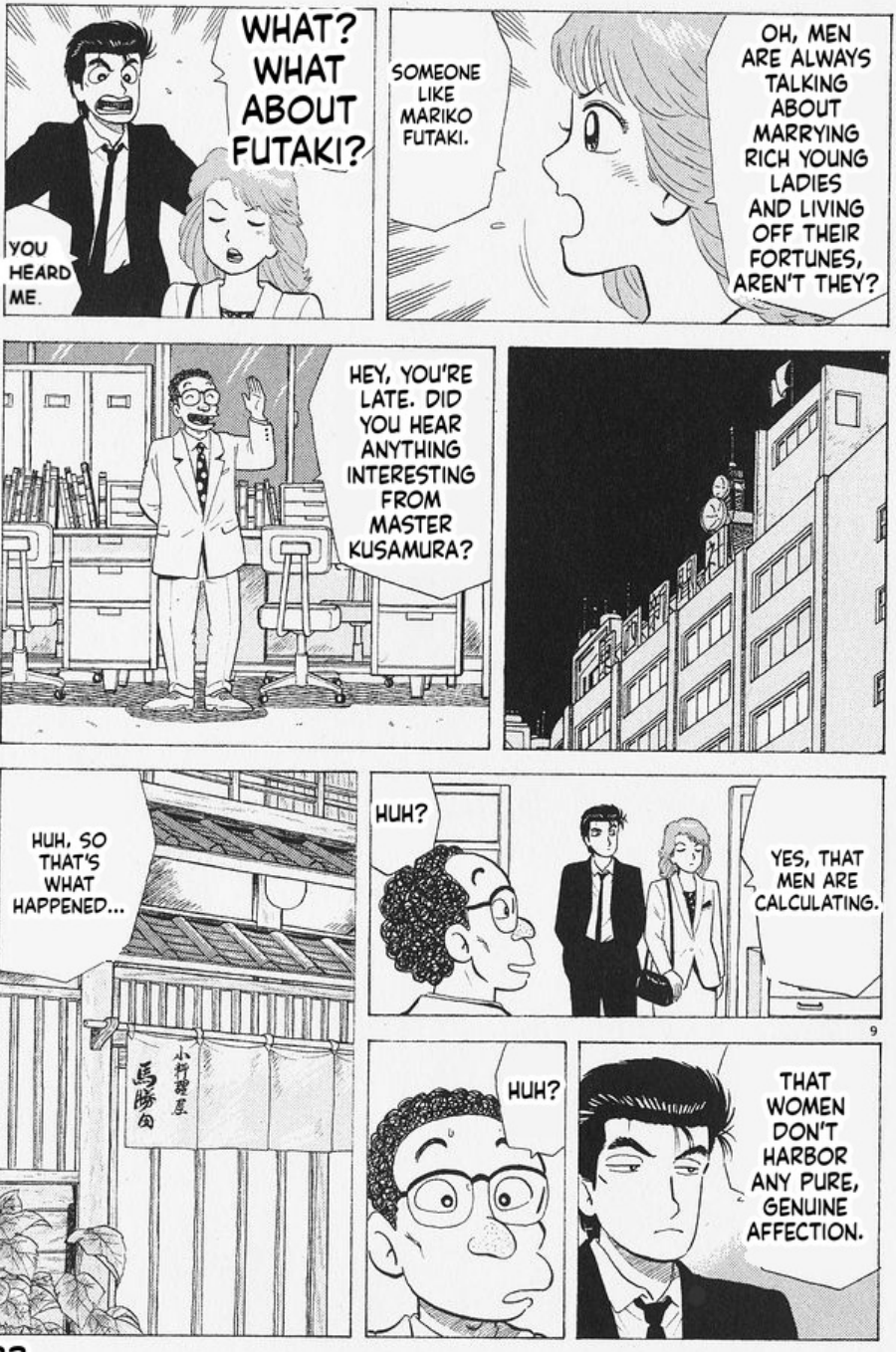
6


SHE SEEMED TO BE TORN.
ON THE OTHER HAND, SHE HAD A MARRIAGE PARTNER CHOSEN BY HER PARENTS. HE WAS THE SON OF A POWERFUL POLITICIAN, A MAN DESTINED FOR SUCCESS.


BUT THERE WASN'T ENOUGH MONEY FOR TWO PEOPLE, SO IF I GOT MARRIED, GOING ABROAD WOULD NO LONGER BE AN OPTION.
I HAD SOMEONE I LOOKED UP TO AS A MENTOR, AND HE SAID HE WOULD PAY FOR ME TO GO ABROAD TO STUDY ART.

MY UNCLE LIVES IN SHIMOMARUKO, SO LET'S MEET AT SHIMOMARUKO STATION ON THE TOKYU MEKAMA LINE AT THREE THIS COMING SUNDAY AFTERNOON AND GO TO HIS HOUSE.
東京急行
下丸子駅
SHIMOMARUKO STATION
出口
MARRY ME. I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET MY UNCLE, WHO RAISED ME AFTER MY PARENTS DIED.
I MADE UP MY MIND AND TOLD HER.
SHE DIDN'T COME.
IF YOU DON'T COME, I'LL TAKE IT AS YOUR ANSWER THAT YOU REFUSE TO MARRY ME...
SHIMOMARUKO
AND I ALSO SAID THIS.
I IMMEDIATELY COMPLETED THE FORMALITIES AND LEFT JAPAN.
SHE HAD ABANDONED ME AND CHOSEN THE SON OF A POWERFUL POLITICIAN.
I WAITED FOR HOURS AT THE STATION TICKET GATE. DURING THAT TIME, I CALLED HER APARTMENT SEVERAL TIMES, BUT SHE WASN'T THERE.
I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING SO PATHETIC. I KNEW EXACTLY HOW SHE FELT.
WITHOUT CONFIRMING HOW SHE FELT ABOUT YOU?


I STILL CAN'T FORGET ITS FRAGRANCE OR TASTE...
SHE HAD LEARNED TO MAKE IT FROM HER GRAND-MOTHER.
SHE WAS THE ONE WHO GAVE ME YUBESHI FOR THE FIRST TIME.
THAT'S WHY KUSAMURA-SAN IS STILL SINGLE...
HAHAHA... I'VE BURDENED YOU WITH SUCH A DULL STORY. PLEASE FORGET I EVER MENTIONED IT.
HE CHOOSES THE DESIRE TO SUCCEED AS A PAINTER OVER A WOMAN'S PURE LOVE.
WELL, AREN'T MEN THE CALCULATING ONES?
THEY'RE SWAYED BY MEN WITH STATUS AND MONEY.
THAT'S JUST WHAT WOMEN ARE LIKE.
WHAT'S THIS ABOUT A WOMAN'S PURE LOVE?
BAH, WOMEN THESE DAYS SAY THEY WON'T MARRY UNLESS THE MAN IS TALL, HIGHLY EDUCATED, AND WELL-PAID.


WHAT? WHAT ABOUT FUTAKI?
YOU HEARD ME.
SOMEONE LIKE MARIKO FUTAKI.
OH, MEN ARE ALWAYS TALKING ABOUT MARRYING RICH YOUNG LADIES AND LIVING OFF THEIR FORTUNES, AREN'T THEY?
HEY, YOU'RE LATE. DID YOU HEAR ANYTHING INTERESTING FROM MASTER KUSAMURA?
HUH, SO THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED...
HUH?
YES, THAT MEN ARE CALCULATING.
9
HUH?
THAT WOMEN DON'T HARBOR ANY PURE, GENUINE AFFECTION.

YOU'RE ONLY SAYING THAT BECAUSE YOU'RE LIKE THAT YOURSELF!
THAT'S MEN FOR YOU. YOUR OWN DESIRES MATTER MORE TO YOU.
THAT'S WHY THEY SAY WOMEN ARE CALCULATING.
WAIT, WAIT!
THEN WHAT ABOUT YOU, MR. YAMAOKA?!
COME ON, LET'S GO SOMEWHERE ELSE!
YOU TWO DON'T NEED TO FIGHT OVER MR. KUSAMURA!
WELL, LET'S HAVE A DRINK HERE BEFORE WE GO.
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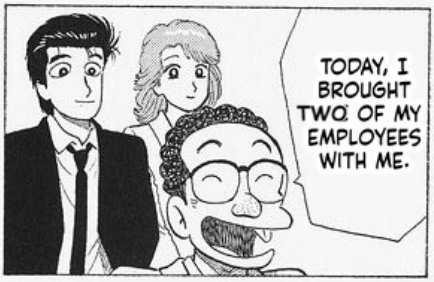
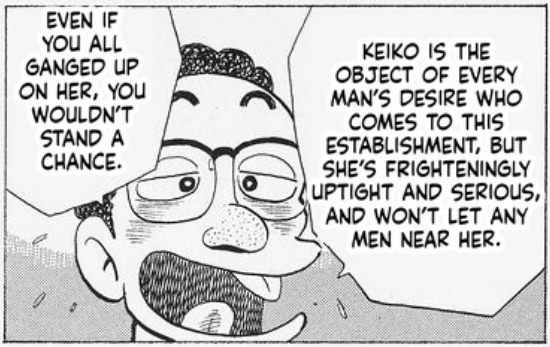
柚
10
GOOD EVENING.


TODAY, I BROUGHT TWO OF MY EMPLOYEES WITH ME.

TOMII-SAN! HOW ARE YOU? IT'S BEEN A WHILE.

WHAT DO YOU THINK? SHE'S BEAUTIFUL, ISN'T SHE?

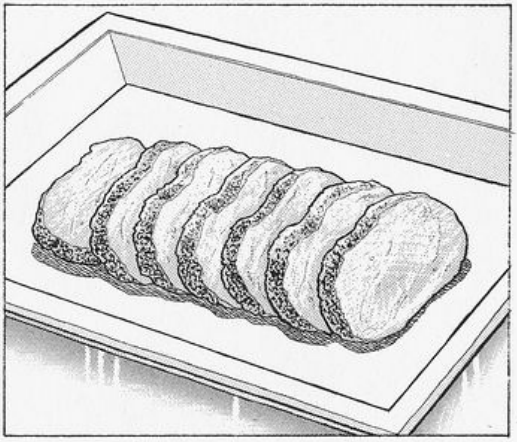
FIRST, PLEASE HAVE SOME OF THIS.

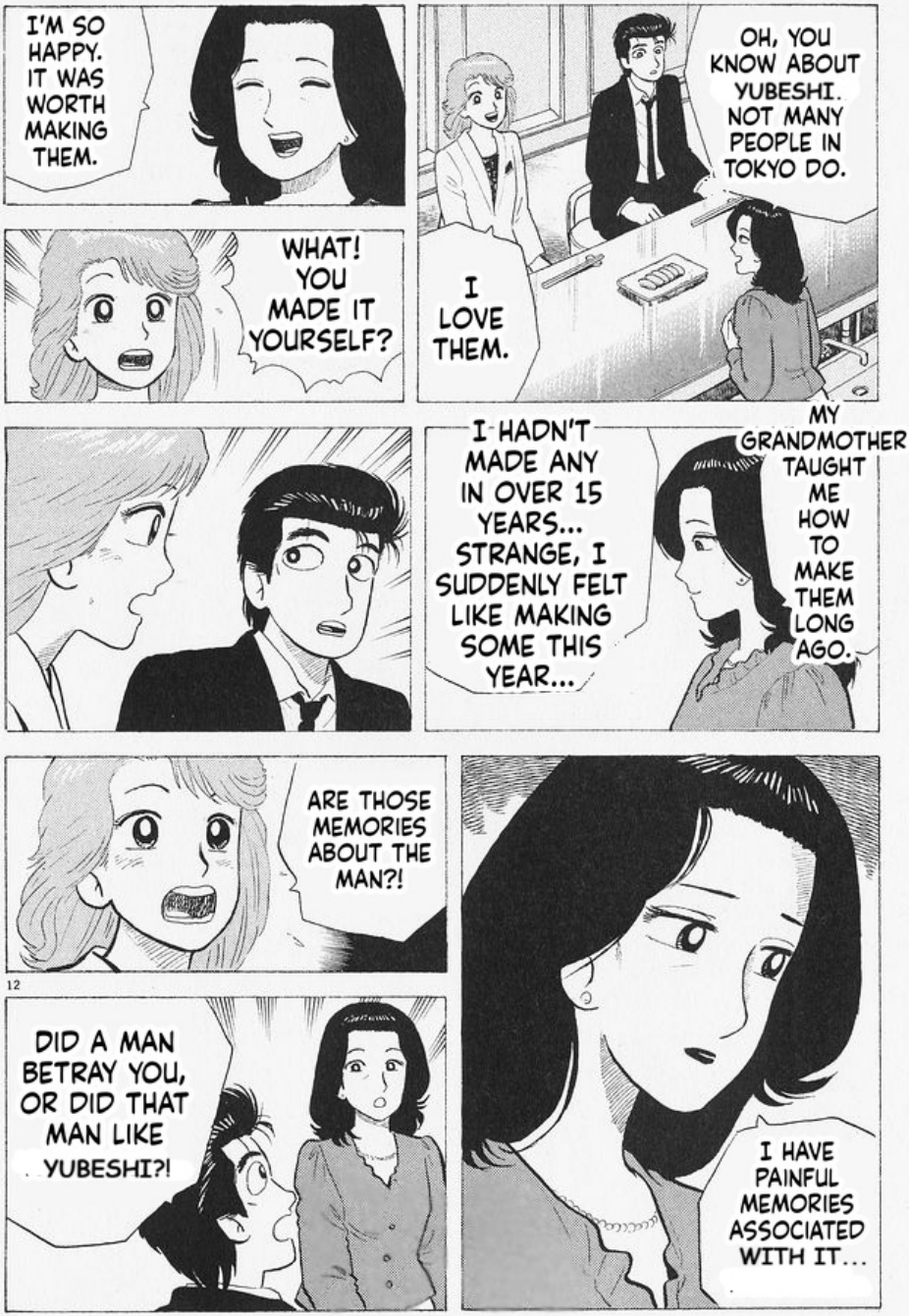

EVEN IF YOU ALL GANGED UP ON HER, YOU WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE.
KEIKO IS THE OBJECT OF EVERY MAN'S DESIRE WHO COMES TO THIS ESTABLISHMENT, BUT SHE'S FRIGHTENINGLY UPTIGHT AND SERIOUS, AND WON'T LET ANY MEN NEAR HER.

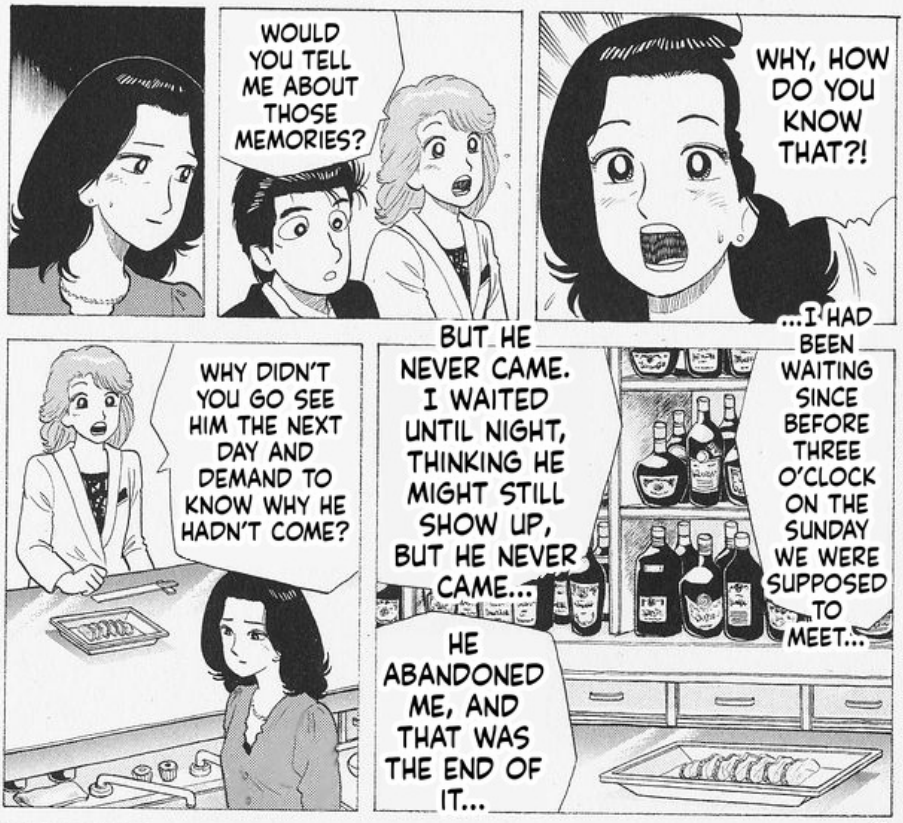
11

AH.

IT'S YUBESHI!



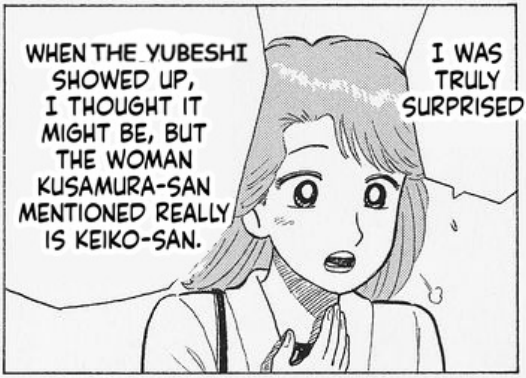

I'M SO HAPPY. IT WAS WORTH MAKING THEM.
OH, YOU KNOW ABOUT YUBESHI. NOT MANY PEOPLE IN TOKYO DO.
I LOVE THEM.
WHAT! YOU MADE IT YOURSELF?
MY GRANDMOTHER TAUGHT ME HOW TO MAKE THEM LONG AGO.
I HADN'T MADE ANY IN OVER 15 YEARS... STRANGE, I SUDDENLY FELT LIKE MAKING SOME THIS YEAR...
ARE THOSE MEMORIES ABOUT THE MAN?!
I HAVE PAINFUL MEMORIES ASSOCIATED WITH IT...
DID A MAN BETRAY YOU, OR DID THAT MAN LIKE YUBESHI?!

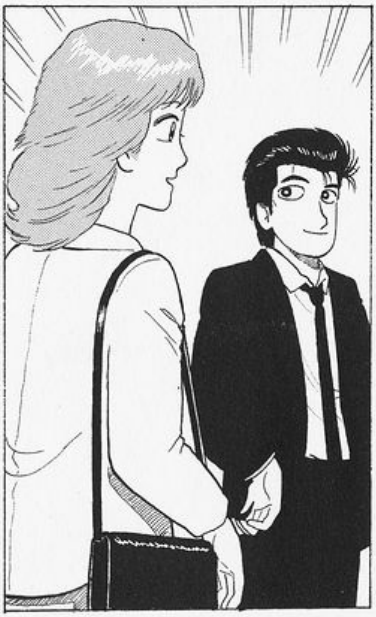

WOULD YOU TELL ME ABOUT THOSE MEMORIES?
WHY, HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?!
...I HAD BEEN WAITING SINCE BEFORE THREE O'CLOCK ON THE SUNDAY WE WERE SUPPOSED TO MEET...
BUT HE NEVER CAME. I WAITED UNTIL NIGHT, THINKING HE MIGHT STILL SHOW UP, BUT HE NEVER CAME...
HE ABANDONED ME, AND THAT WAS THE END OF IT...
WHY DIDN'T YOU GO SEE HIM THE NEXT DAY AND DEMAND TO KNOW WHY HE HADN'T COME?
13
SO, KEIKO, DID YOU MARRY THE MAN YOUR PARENTS HAD CHOSEN FOR YOU?
IN THE END, HIS PAINFUL DECISION WAS NOT TO COME TO OUR MEETING PLACE.
HE MUST HAVE AGONIZED OVER WHETHER TO GO ABROAD TO STUDY PAINTING OR CHOOSE ME.
I HEARD THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE THAT HE WENT TO FRANCE SOON AFTERWARD.
SO, YOU WERE ALONE ALL THAT TIME...
NO, I DECIDED TO TRY TO MAKE MY WAY IN LIFE ALL ON MY OWN.

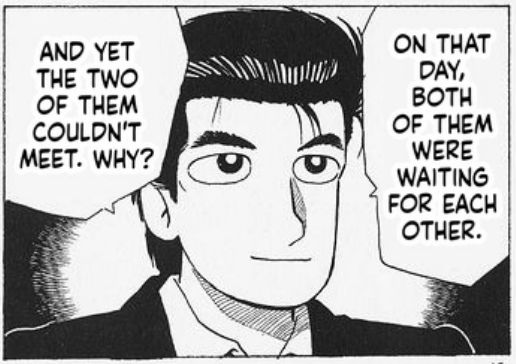
THAT IS SO ROMANTIC, KEIKO.
I DON'T THINK THAT'S IT. IT MUST BE BECAUSE YOU COULDN'T FORGET THAT MAN, KEIKO.
ONCE I OPENED MY OWN SHOP, I WAS SO BUSY RUNNING IT THAT I SIMPLY DIDN'T HAVE THE TIME...
BEFORE I OPENED THIS SHOP, I WORKED MYSELF TO THE BONE. I HAD NO TIME TO THINK ABOUT MEN.
KEIKO, DO YOU REMEMBER THE NAME OF THE STATION WHERE YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO MEET?
ASSISTANT MANAGER.
KEIKO, ACTUALLY, THAT PAINTER...
OH, NO, THAT'S NOT...
14
ASSISTANT MANAGER, MS. KURITA, LET'S GO.
YES, WELL THEN, KEIKO, SEE YOU LATER!
OF COURSE I REMEMBER. SHIN-MARUKO STATION ON THE TOKYU TOYOKO LINE.
SHIN-MARUKO?

TO BEGIN WITH, DIDN'T YOU UNDERSTAND WHILE LISTENING? IT'S AN INCREDIBLE COINCIDENCE, BUT KEIKO-SAN'S PARTNER IS THE PAINTER KUSAMURA!
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?! YOU DRAGGED ME OUT HERE BY FORCE!

IF YOU KNEW, WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL HER?! FINE, I'LL...
TOMII, YOU REALLY DON'T GET IT, DO YOU?


WHEN THE YUBESHI SHOWED UP, I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE, BUT THE WOMAN KUSAMURA-SAN MENTIONED REALLY IS KEIKO-SAN.
I WAS TRULY SURPRISED.



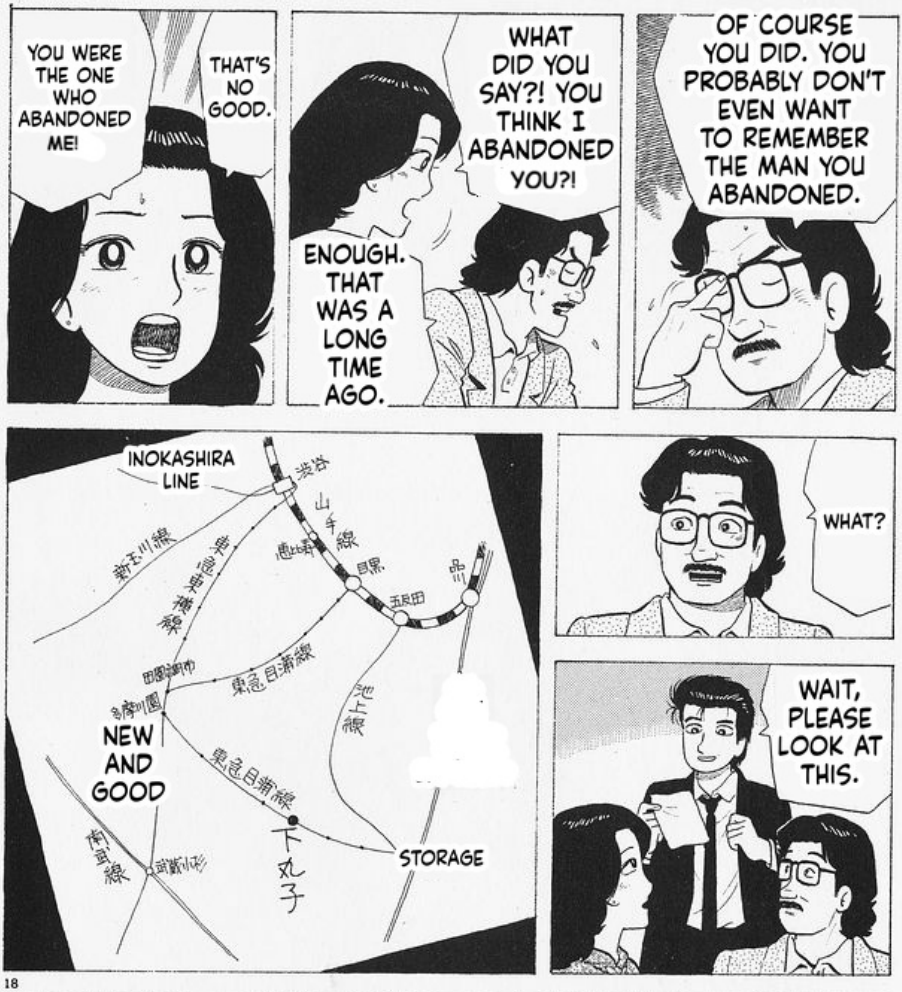

AND YET THE TWO OF THEM COULDN'T MEET. WHY?
ON THAT DAY, BOTH OF THEM WERE WAITING FOR EACH OTHER.

15

STRANGE... WHY COULDN'T THEY MEET?
HM? HUH? WHAT?

HOW THOUGHTFUL. SINCE YOU TWO, THE PEOPLE IN CHARGE OF THE ULTIMATE MENU, ARE TREATING ME, I SUPPOSE I'LL BE EATING SOMETHING TRULY DELICIOUS.
PLEASE LOOK FORWARD TO IT—WE'VE PREPARED A MAGNIFICENT MEAL.
岡屋
HMM?
YES, THERE'S SOMEONE WE'D LIKE YOU TO MEET, MR. KUSAMURA.
HM? IS SOMEONE ELSE JOINING US?
I WONDER WHAT'S KEEPING THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR. HE'S LATE...
16
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING.
カラ
PLEASE, COME IN.

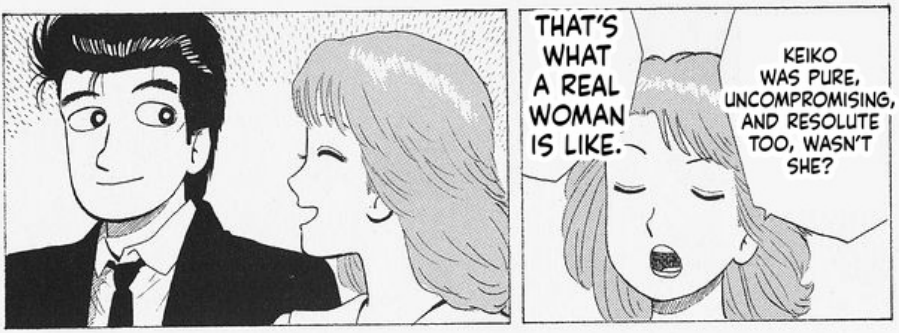
AHH!
AH!
YES, B- BUT...
KEIKO, PLEASE, JOIN US.
PLEASE, COME IN.
YOU TOO...
YOU LOOK WELL...
17
I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING AT ALL. ABOUT THE ART WORLD, I...
OH, THAT'S WONDERFUL! YOU SUCCEEDED!
KUSAMURA MADE QUITE A NAME FOR HIMSELF IN FRANCE AND HAS JUST RECENTLY RETURNED TO JAPAN.

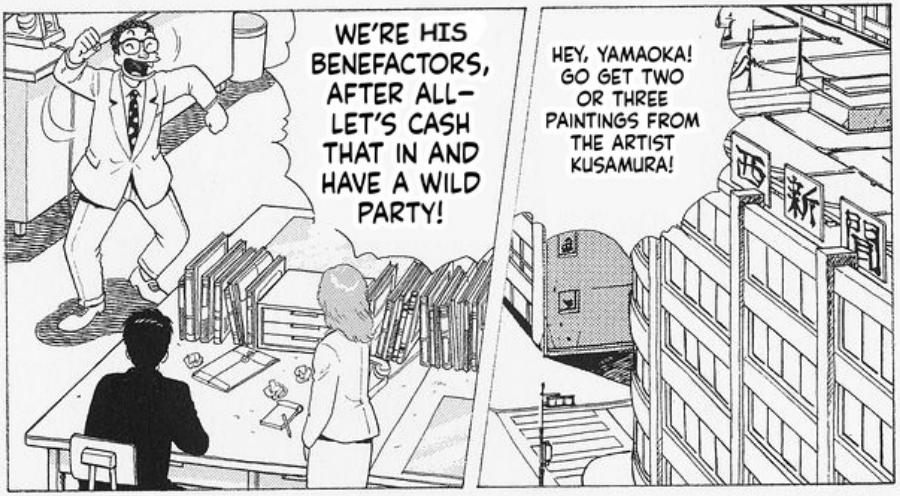

YOU WERE THE ONE WHO ABANDONED ME!
THAT'S NO GOOD.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?! YOU THINK I ABANDONED YOU?!
ENOUGH. THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO.
OF COURSE YOU DID. YOU PROBABLY DON'T EVEN WANT TO REMEMBER THE MAN YOU ABANDONED.
INOKASHIRA LINE
渋谷
山手線
目黒
五反田
品川
新玉川線
東急東横線
東急目蒲線
池上線
NEW AND GOOD
STORAGE
下丸子
WHAT?
WAIT, PLEASE LOOK AT THIS.
18
WHAT?!
SHIN-MARUKO STATION.
KEIKO, THE STATION WHERE YOU WERE WAITING FOR KUSAMURA WAS...
WHAT IS THIS? IT'S A TRAIN ROUTE MAP.

IF YOU WERE WAITING AT DIFFERENT STATIONS, YOU COULDN'T HAVE MET EVEN IF YOU WAITED A HUNDRED YEARS.
SHIMO-MARUKO IS ON THE TOKYU MEKAMA LINE, AND SHIN-MARUKO IS ON THE TOKYU TOYOKO LINE.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
KUSAMURA-SAN, WHERE WERE YOU WAITING?
IT'S SHIMO-MARUKO STATION.
THEN IT COULD'VE BEEN SHIN-MARUKO ON THE TOKYU TOYOKO LINE...
I HAD JUST COME FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE AND DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT TOKYO'S TRAINS, SO I ASKED A FRIEND,
YOU CALLED ME, TERRIBLY EXCITED, AND TOLD ME THE STATION NAME, BUT ALL I COULD MAKE OUT WAS SOMETHING MARUKO ON THE TOKYU LINE!
KEIKO-SAN, YOU WENT TO THE WRONG STATION?!
AH... WHAT A DISASTER...
19
SO THAT'S WHY YOU HADN'T NOTICED UNTIL NOW.
...SINCE THEN, I'VE ALWAYS LIVED ALONG THE CHUO LINE, SO I'VE NEVER USED THE TOYOKO LINE OR THE MEKAMA LINE.
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE SEIBU OR TOBU LINES EITHER.
IT COULD HAPPEN.

WE... DID SOMETHING OUTRAGEOUS...
THEN... BACK THEN...
NOW, PLEASE EAT THIS FIRST.
HERE, IT'S YUZU MISO.
REMOVE THE PULP FROM A YUZU, MIX MISO DISSOLVED IN SAKE WITH CHICKEN, GINKGO NUTS, SESAME SEEDS, SHIITAKE MUSHROOMS, AND WHATEVER ELSE YOU LIKE, KNEAD IT TOGETHER, ADD THE CHOPPED YUZU PULP, PLACE
IT INSIDE THE YUZU PEEL, AND SLOWLY GRILL IT OVER CHARCOAL.
WHEN THE PEEL IS CHARRED AND BUBBLING, IT'S READY.

WHAT A RELIEF! IT FEELS LIKE A WEIGHT HAS BEEN LIFTED FROM MY CHEST!
RICH YET REFRESHING!
ホフー ホフー
OH! THIS IS WONDERFUL! THE YUZU AROMA IS INCREDIBLY VIBRANT!
TAKU.
KEIKO.
IT HAS A RICH FLAVOR, KNOWS BOTH SWEETNESS AND SOURNESS, AND IS VIVID YET PURE.
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S THE PERFECT DISH FOR STARTING YOUR RELATIONSHIP OVER—THE RELATIONSHIP THAT BEGAN WITH YUBESHI?
ゲッ
21
THAT'S WHAT A REAL MAN IS LIKE.
SEE, KUSAMURA WAS A PURE SOUL.


THAT'S WHAT A REAL WOMAN IS LIKE.
KEIKO WAS PURE, UNCOMPROMISING, AND RESOLUTE TOO, WASN'T SHE?


WE'RE HIS BENEFACTORS, AFTER ALL— LET'S CASH THAT IN AND HAVE A WILD PARTY!
HEY, YAMAOKA! GO GET TWO OR THREE PAINTINGS FROM THE ARTIST KUSAMURA!

22

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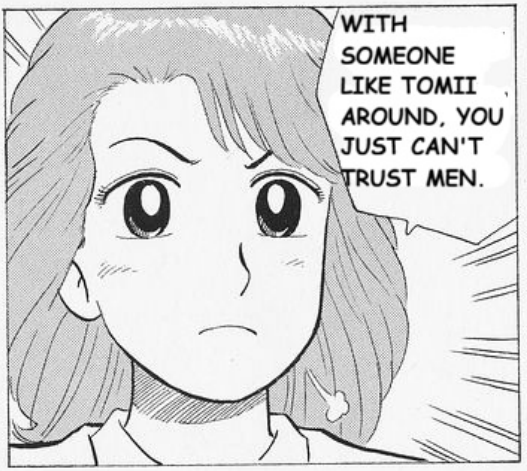
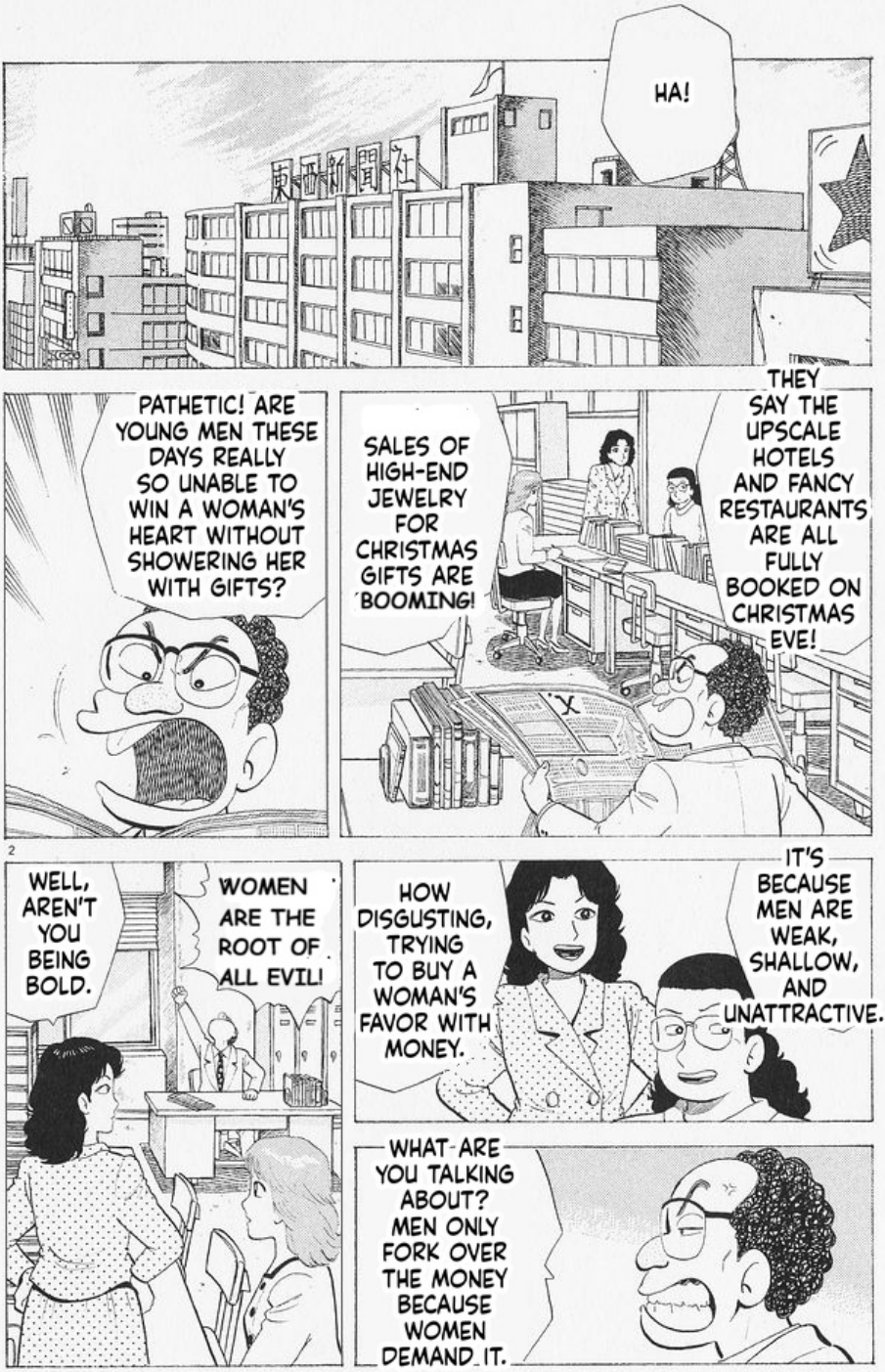

WITH SOMEONE LIKE TOMII AROUND, YOU JUST CAN'T TRUST MEN.

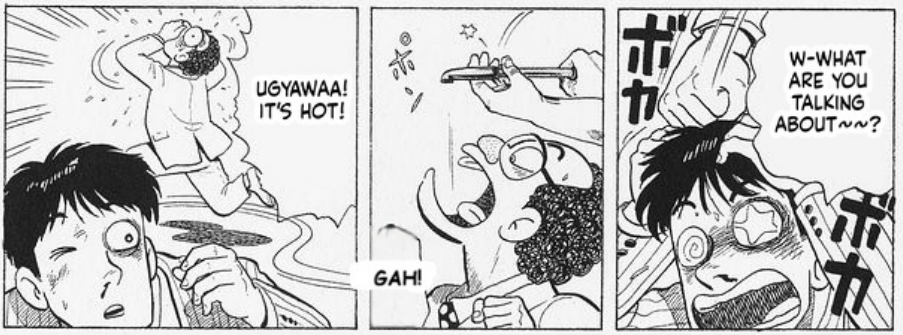
第3話
魔法の毛抜き


HA!
東西新聞社
PATHETIC! ARE YOUNG MEN THESE DAYS REALLY SO UNABLE TO WIN A WOMAN'S HEART WITHOUT SHOWERING HER WITH GIFTS?
SALES OF HIGH-END JEWELRY FOR CHRISTMAS GIFTS ARE BOOMING!
THEY SAY THE UPSCALE HOTELS AND FANCY RESTAURANTS ARE ALL FULLY BOOKED ON CHRISTMAS EVE!
2
WELL, AREN'T YOU BEING BOLD.
WOMEN ARE THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL!
HOW DISGUSTING, TRYING TO BUY A WOMAN'S FAVOR WITH MONEY.
IT'S BECAUSE MEN ARE WEAK, SHALLOW, AND UNATTRACTIVE.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? MEN ONLY FORK OVER THE MONEY BECAUSE WOMEN DEMAND IT.

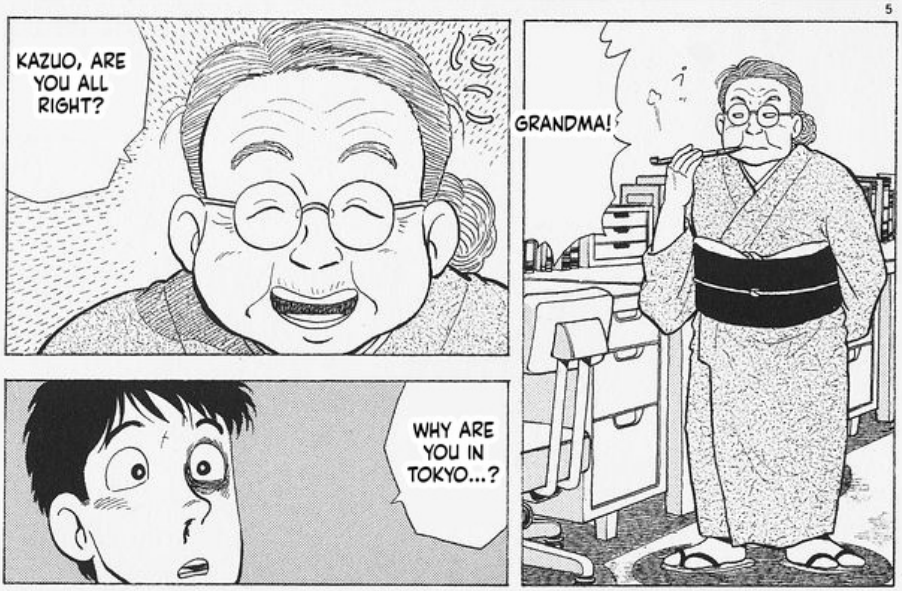
TOO LATE.
I RETRACT IT IMMEDIATELY, SO PLEASE DON'T LET IT GET OUT...
Y-YEAH... LET'S KEEP WHAT I JUST SAID BETWEEN US.
SOUNDS LIKE YOU WANT THE FEMINIST WARRIORS TO SURROUND THE CULTURAL CLUB.
IF YOU COVER LUNCH FOR THE ENTIRE WEEK NEXT WEEK, I MIGHT PRETEND I DIDN'T HEAR WHAT YOU JUST SAID.
I WONDER WHAT MRS. TOMII WOULD THINK TO HEAR YOUR OPINION ON HOW EVIL WOMEN ARE...
HOW CRUEL!
EEK, I'LL BE KILLED!
3
DO ME A LITTLE FAVOR, FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE AS FELLOW MEMBERS OF THE SAME COHORT.
OH, NAKAMOTO.
YO, HOW ARE YOU DOING?
JUST SAY THE WORD.

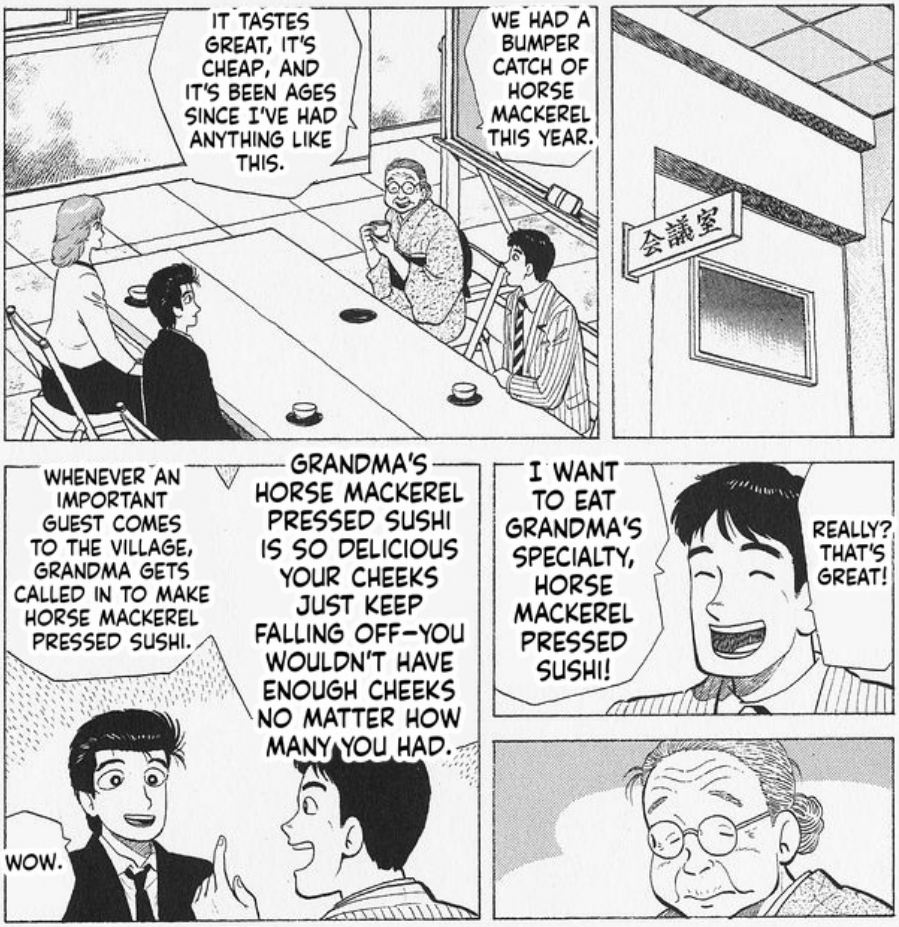
WHAT~~? YOU'RE HAVING DINNER WITH YOUR GIRLFRIEND ON CHRISTMAS~~?
ACTUALLY, I'M HAVING DINNER WITH HER ON CHRISTMAS EVE. WHICH OF THESE RESTAURANTS WOULD BE BEST?
FOR NOW, I'LL HOLD RESERVATIONS AT ALL OF THESE, GET VARIOUS PEOPLE'S OPINIONS, KEEP THE BEST ONE, AND CANCEL THE REST.
ALL THE RESTAURANTS WRITTEN HERE HAVE BEEN RESERVED.
BUT IF YOU'RE ONLY SAYING THIS NOW, I HEAR ALL THE GOOD RESTAURANTS ARE ALREADY FULLY BOOKED FOR CHRISTMAS.
A RUBY RING.
THEN, WHAT ABOUT THE JEWELRY...
THAT WOMAN MUST BE VERY IMPORTANT TO YOU.
YOU'VE REALLY GONE ALL OUT.
4
A RUBY RING—!

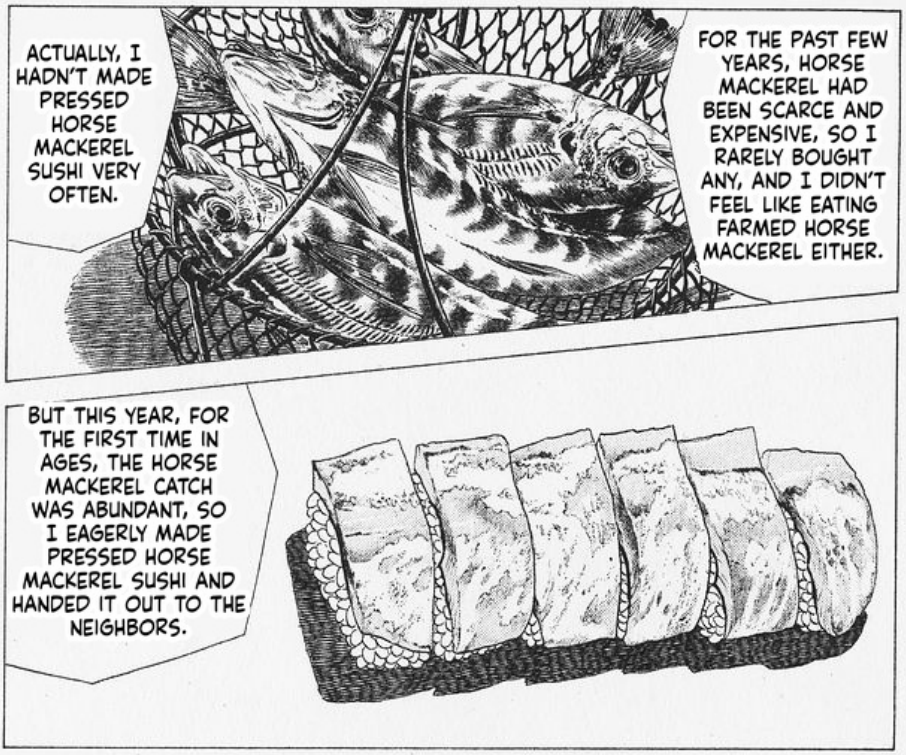
I HAVE TO PAY FOR A WEEK'S WORTH OF LUNCHES!!!
BECAUSE THERE ARE WIMPY MEN LIKE YOU,
TAKE THAT!

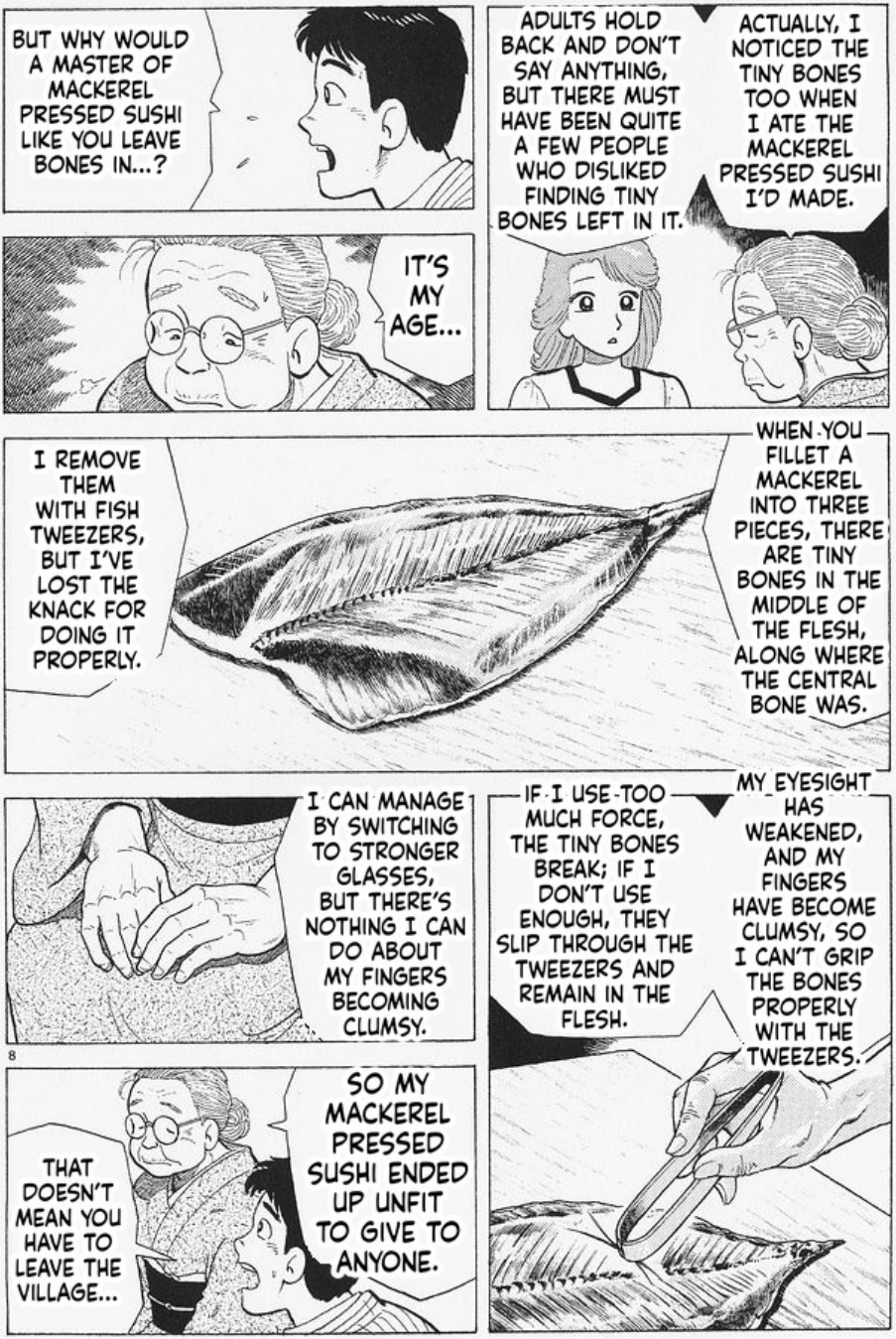

UGYAWAA! IT'S HOT!
GAH!
W-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT~~?

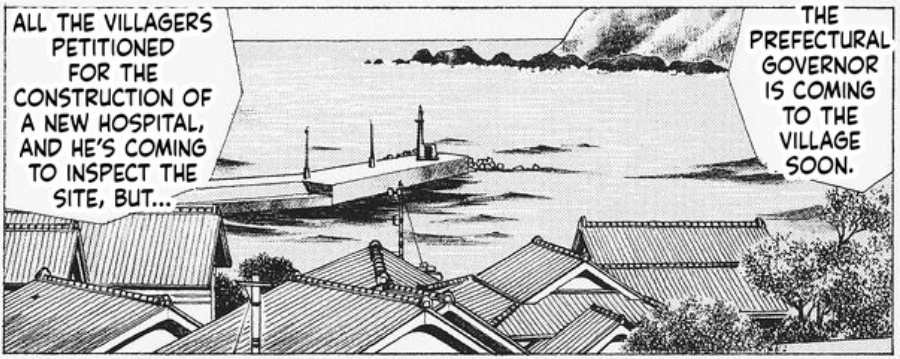
5


KAZUO, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
GRANDMA!
WHY ARE YOU IN TOKYO...?

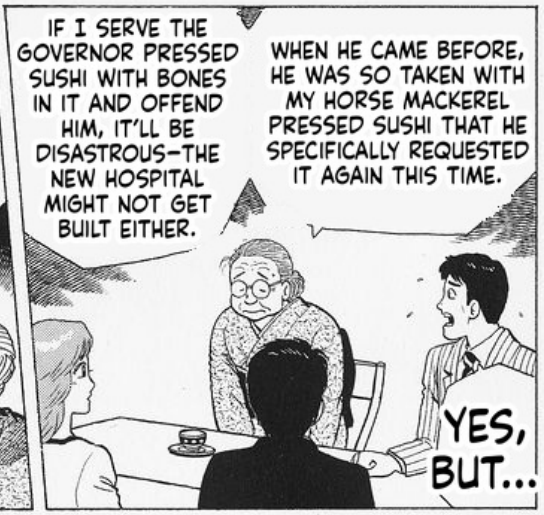

IT TASTES GREAT, IT'S CHEAP, AND IT'S BEEN AGES SINCE I'VE HAD ANYTHING LIKE THIS.
WE HAD A BUMPER CATCH OF HORSE MACKEREL THIS YEAR.
会議室
WHENEVER AN IMPORTANT GUEST COMES TO THE VILLAGE, GRANDMA GETS CALLED IN TO MAKE HORSE MACKEREL PRESSED SUSHI.
GRANDMA'S HORSE MACKEREL PRESSED SUSHI IS SO DELICIOUS YOUR CHEEKS JUST KEEP FALLING OFF—YOU WOULDN'T HAVE ENOUGH CHEEKS NO MATTER HOW MANY YOU HAD.
WOW.
I WANT TO EAT GRANDMA'S SPECIALTY, HORSE MACKEREL PRESSED SUSHI!
REALLY? THAT'S GREAT!
6
WHAT?
BECAUSE OF THAT HORSE MACKEREL PRESSED SUSHI, I COULD NO LONGER STAY IN THE VILLAGE.....
NO WAY.....
THAT HORSE MACKEREL PRESSED SUSHI SOUNDS SO DELICIOUS. I'D LOVE TO TRY SOME, TOO.

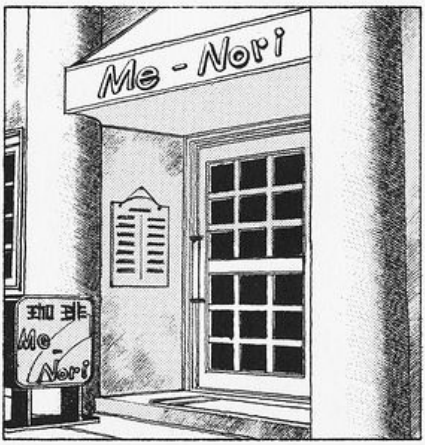

ACTUALLY, I HADN'T MADE PRESSED HORSE MACKEREL SUSHI VERY OFTEN.
FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS, HORSE MACKEREL HAD BEEN SCARCE AND EXPENSIVE, SO I RARELY BOUGHT ANY, AND I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE EATING FARMED HORSE MACKEREL EITHER.
BUT THIS YEAR, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN AGES, THE HORSE MACKEREL CATCH WAS ABUNDANT, SO I EAGERLY MADE PRESSED HORSE MACKEREL SUSHI AND HANDED IT OUT TO THE NEIGHBORS.
7
THE NEXT DAY, I RAN INTO THE NEIGHBOR'S CHILD, WHO SAID A BONE FROM THE PRESSED HORSE MACKEREL SUSHI HAD GOTTEN STUCK IN THEIR THROAT...
I WAS PLANNING TO, BUT...
THEY MUST HAVE BEEN DELIGHTED. EVERYONE GOT TO EAT GRANDMA'S PRESSED HORSE MACKEREL SUSHI.
I KNEW IT WAS MY FAULT.
A BONE IN THEIR THROAT?


BUT WHY WOULD A MASTER OF MACKEREL PRESSED SUSHI LIKE YOU LEAVE BONES IN...?
ADULTS HOLD BACK AND DON'T SAY ANYTHING, BUT THERE MUST HAVE BEEN QUITE A FEW PEOPLE WHO DISLIKED FINDING TINY BONES LEFT IN IT.
ACTUALLY, I NOTICED THE TINY BONES TOO WHEN I ATE THE MACKEREL PRESSED SUSHI I'D MADE.
IT'S MY AGE...
I REMOVE THEM WITH FISH TWEEZERS, BUT I'VE LOST THE KNACK FOR DOING IT PROPERLY.
WHEN YOU FILLET A MACKEREL INTO THREE PIECES, THERE ARE TINY BONES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FLESH, ALONG WHERE THE CENTRAL BONE WAS.
I CAN MANAGE BY SWITCHING TO STRONGER GLASSES, BUT THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT MY FINGERS BECOMING CLUMSY.
IF I USE TOO MUCH FORCE, THE TINY BONES BREAK; IF I DON'T USE ENOUGH, THEY SLIP THROUGH THE TWEEZERS AND REMAIN IN THE FLESH.
MY EYESIGHT HAS WEAKENED, AND MY FINGERS HAVE BECOME CLUMSY, SO I CAN'T GRIP THE BONES PROPERLY WITH THE TWEEZERS.
8
SO MY MACKEREL PRESSED SUSHI ENDED UP UNFIT TO GIVE TO ANYONE.
THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO LEAVE THE VILLAGE...


ALL THE VILLAGERS PETITIONED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW HOSPITAL, AND HE'S COMING TO INSPECT THE SITE, BUT...
THE PREFECTURAL GOVERNOR IS COMING TO THE VILLAGE SOON.

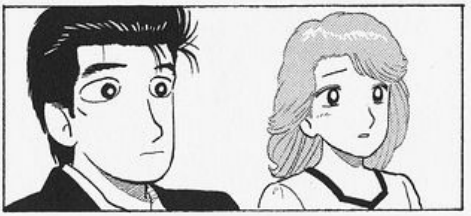
SO I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO RUN AWAY...
SINCE HE SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED IT BY NAME, I COULDN'T VERY WELL REFUSE TO GIVE IT TO HIM.


IF I SERVE THE GOVERNOR PRESSED SUSHI WITH BONES IN IT AND OFFEND HIM, IT'LL BE DISASTROUS—THE NEW HOSPITAL MIGHT NOT GET BUILT EITHER.
WHEN HE CAME BEFORE, HE WAS SO TAKEN WITH MY HORSE MACKEREL PRESSED SUSHI THAT HE SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED IT AGAIN THIS TIME.
YES, BUT...

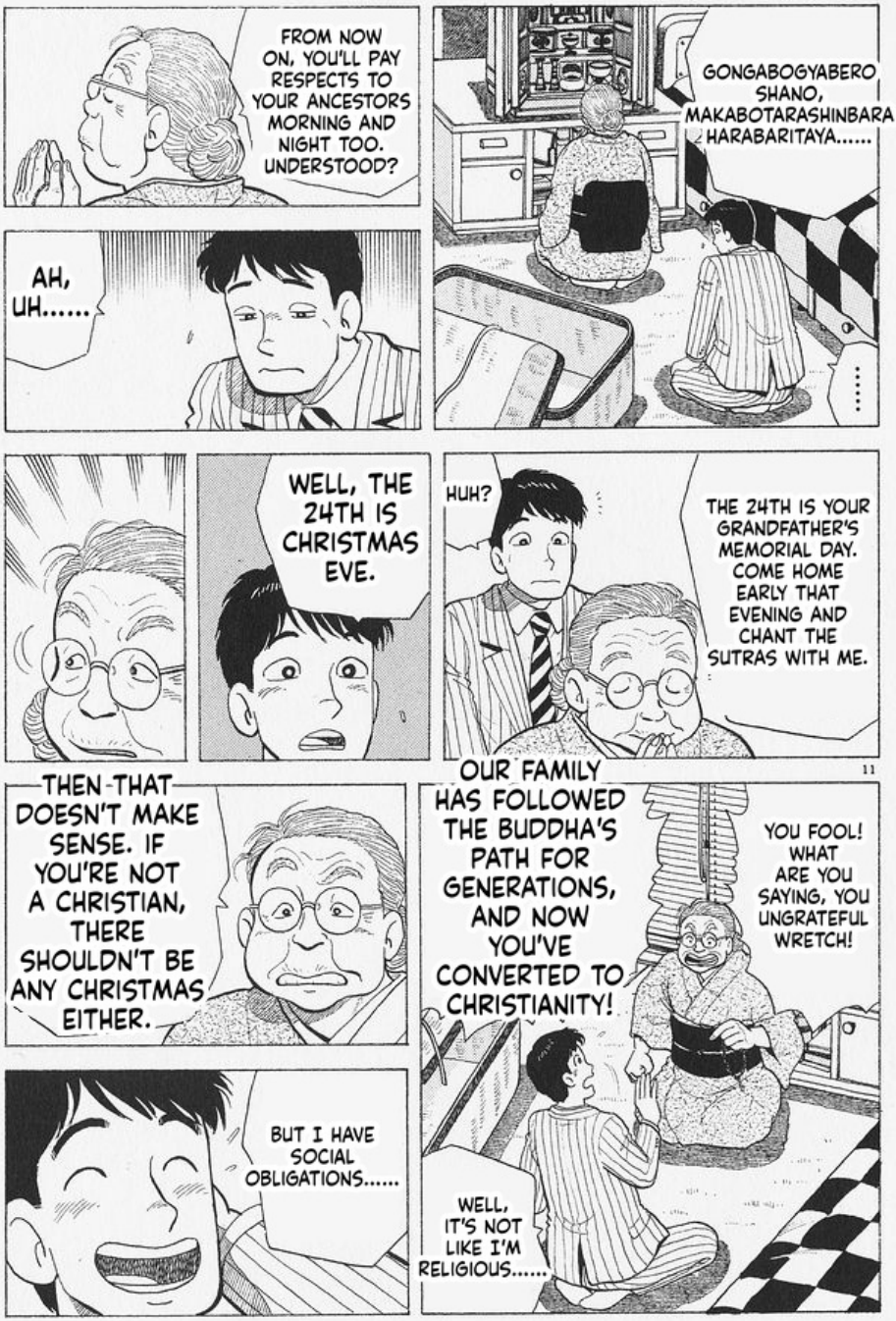

Me - Nori
Me - Nori

.....

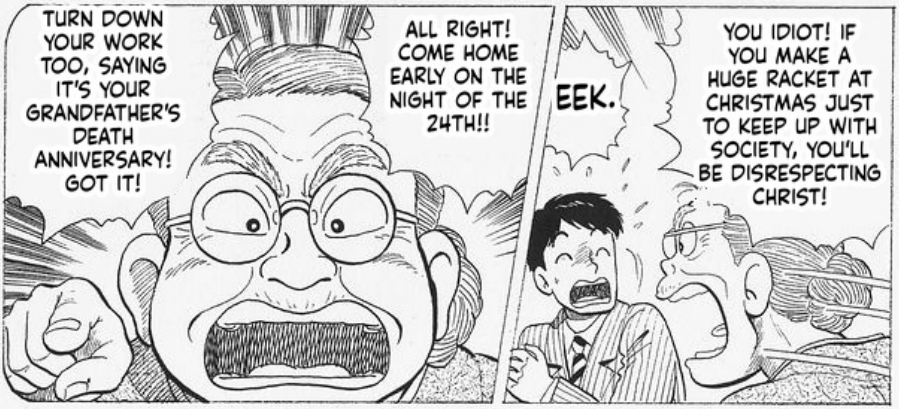
9



DON'T SAY SUCH AWFUL THINGS.
I'M AT MY WIT'S END. GRANDMA'S PLANNING TO MOVE INTO MY APARTMENT.
YOU SAY THAT, BUT IF THINGS STAY LIKE THIS, CHRISTMAS IS GOING TO BE RUINED.
NOW LISTEN TO ME.
WHY?
LET'S HAVE OUR ANCESTOR ENSHRINED HERE.
BUT DON'T WORRY— I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU, GRANDMA.
OH MY, HOW DIRTY.
10
HUH? OUR ANCESTOR?



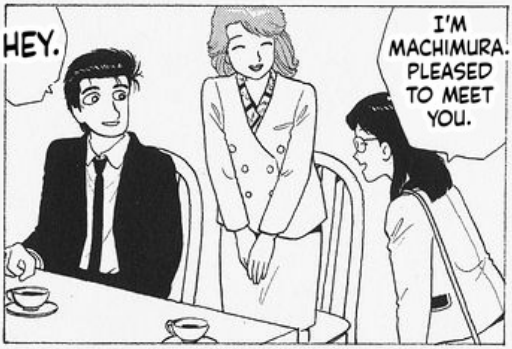
57 *TL NOTE: THE TOP RIGHT PANEL IS, I THINK, SOME SORT OF BUDDHIST PRAYER OR CHANT. AS SUCH, I'M NOT ENTIRELY SURE HOW ACCURATELY IT WAS TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH.


TURN DOWN YOUR WORK TOO, SAYING IT'S YOUR GRANDFATHER'S DEATH ANNIVERSARY! GOT IT!
ALL RIGHT! COME HOME EARLY ON THE NIGHT OF THE 24TH!!
EEK.
YOU IDIOT! IF YOU MAKE A HUGE RACKET AT CHRISTMAS JUST TO KEEP UP WITH SOCIETY, YOU'LL BE DISRESPECTING CHRIST!

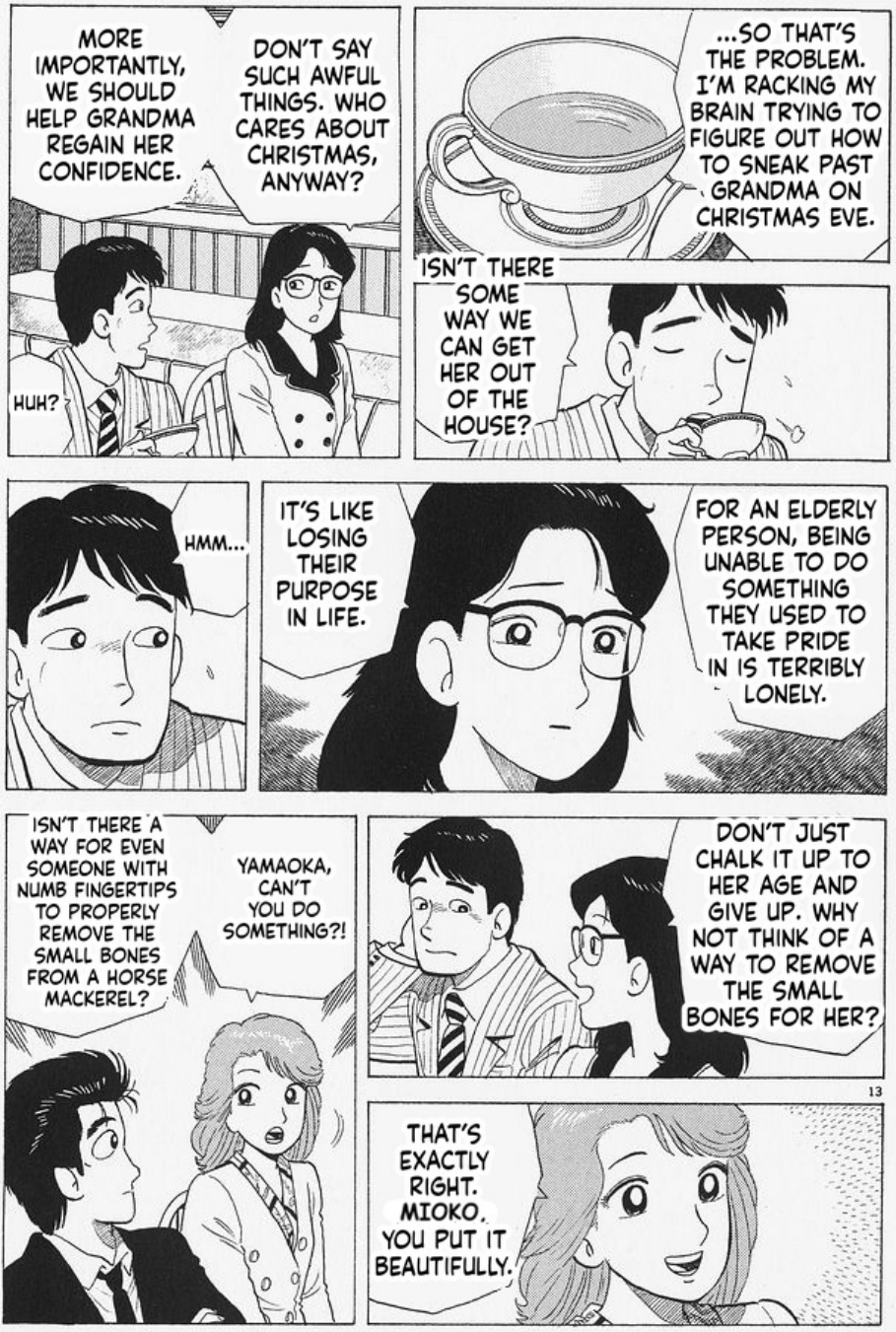
EVEN THOUGH I WAS HOPING TO HAVE A FUN CHRISTMAS EVE WITH MY GIRLFRIEND...
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME. PUT YOURSELF IN MY SHOES...
THAT IS WHAT YOU'D CALL SOUND REASONING.
HAHAHA, YOUR GRANDMOTHER IS ABSOLUTELY RIGHT.

THIS IS MIOKO MACHIMURA.
HEY!

12


HEY.
I'M MACHIMURA. PLEASED TO MEET YOU.

I'M SORRY TO HAVE KEPT YOU WAITING.


MORE IMPORTANTLY, WE SHOULD HELP GRANDMA REGAIN HER CONFIDENCE.
DON'T SAY SUCH AWFUL THINGS. WHO CARES ABOUT CHRISTMAS, ANYWAY?
HUH?
...SO THAT'S THE PROBLEM. I'M RACKING MY BRAIN TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO SNEAK PAST GRANDMA ON CHRISTMAS EVE.
ISN'T THERE SOME WAY WE CAN GET HER OUT OF THE HOUSE?
HMM...
IT'S LIKE LOSING THEIR PURPOSE IN LIFE.
FOR AN ELDERLY PERSON, BEING UNABLE TO DO SOMETHING THEY USED TO TAKE PRIDE IN IS TERRIBLY LONELY.
ISN'T THERE A WAY FOR EVEN SOMEONE WITH NUMB FINGERTIPS TO PROPERLY REMOVE THE SMALL BONES FROM A HORSE MACKEREL?
YAMAOKA, CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHING?!
DON'T JUST CHALK IT UP TO HER AGE AND GIVE UP. WHY NOT THINK OF A WAY TO REMOVE THE SMALL BONES FOR HER?
13
THAT'S EXACTLY RIGHT. MIOKO, YOU PUT IT BEAUTIFULLY.

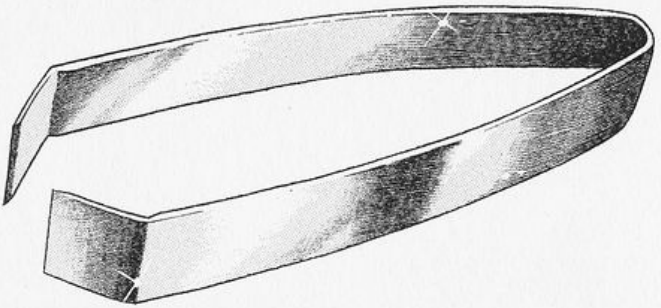
AND MIOKO AND I WILL HAVE A HUGE CHRISTMAS EVE PARTY–

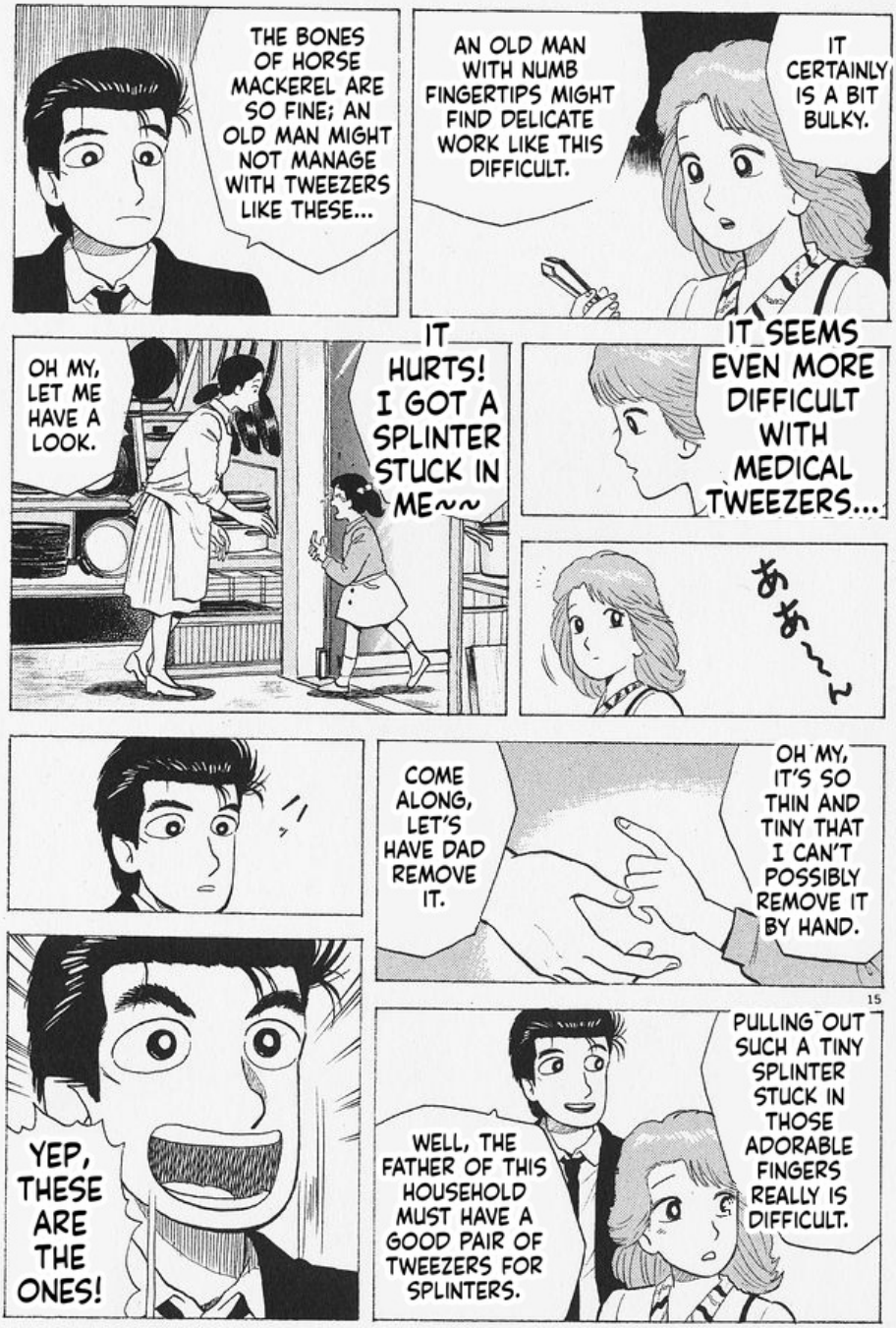
I SUPPOSE I'LL HAVE TO GIVE THIS SOME THOUGHT...
HMM... WHEN YOU PUT IT THAT WAY...

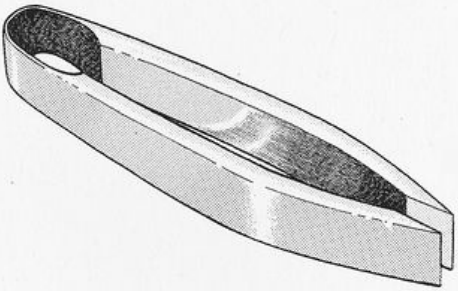
IF THAT HAPPENS, GRANDMA WILL REGAIN HER CONFIDENCE AND RETURN TO THE VILLAGE!
HEY, YAMAOKA! PLEASE, THINK OF SOMETHING!

THERE ARE VARIOUS SIZES, BUT THIS SMALLER ONE IS BETTER FOR REMOVING THE BONES FROM HORSE MACKEREL.
SO THIS IS THE KIND OF BONE TWEEZERS USED FOR COOKING.

COOKING UTENSILS: ISEDŌ

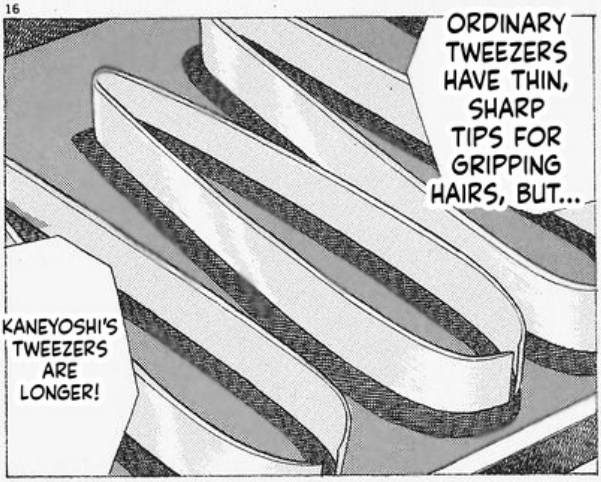


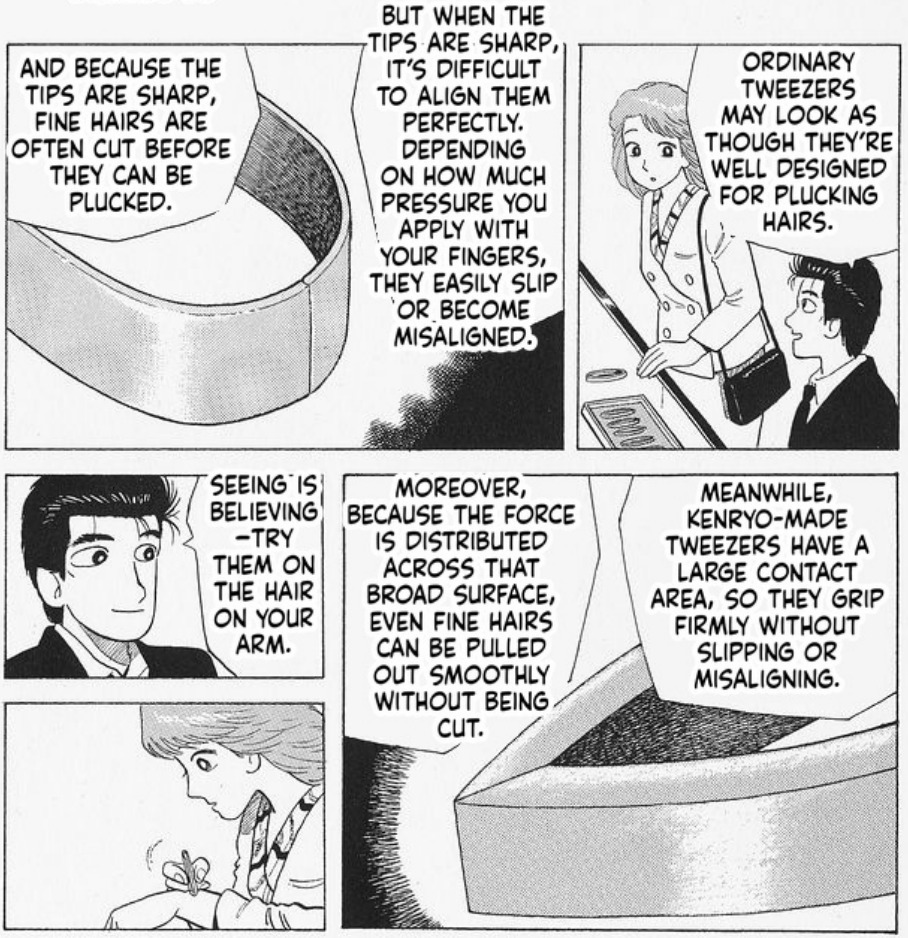

THE BONES OF HORSE MACKEREL ARE SO FINE; AN OLD MAN MIGHT NOT MANAGE WITH TWEEZERS LIKE THESE...
AN OLD MAN WITH NUMB FINGERTIPS MIGHT FIND DELICATE WORK LIKE THIS DIFFICULT.
IT CERTAINLY IS A BIT BULKY.
OH MY, LET ME HAVE A LOOK.
IT HURTS! I GOT A SPLINTER STUCK IN ME~~
IT SEEMS EVEN MORE DIFFICULT WITH MEDICAL TWEEZERS...
あぁ~~
YEP, THESE ARE THE ONES!
COME ALONG, LET'S HAVE DAD REMOVE IT.
OH MY, IT'S SO THIN AND TINY THAT I CAN'T POSSIBLY REMOVE IT BY HAND.
15
WELL, THE FATHER OF THIS HOUSEHOLD MUST HAVE A GOOD PAIR OF TWEEZERS FOR SPLINTERS.
PULLING OUT SUCH A TINY SPLINTER STUCK IN THOSE ADORABLE FINGERS REALLY IS DIFFICULT.



KANEYOSHI'S TWEEZERS! ~~~

16

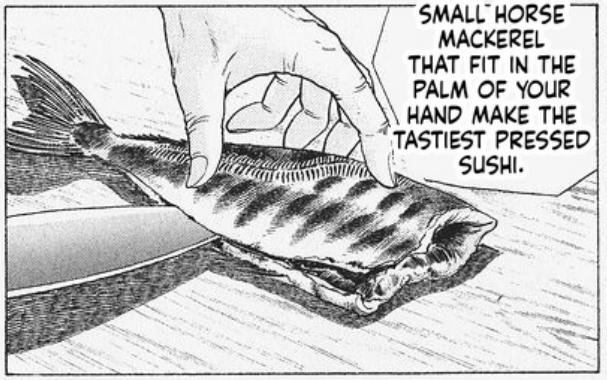


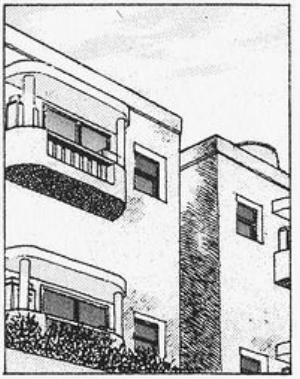

AND BECAUSE THE TIPS ARE SHARP, FINE HAIRS ARE OFTEN CUT BEFORE THEY CAN BE PLUCKED.
BUT WHEN THE TIPS ARE SHARP, IT'S DIFFICULT TO ALIGN THEM PERFECTLY. DEPENDING ON HOW MUCH PRESSURE YOU APPLY WITH YOUR FINGERS, THEY EASILY SLIP OR BECOME MISALIGNED.
ORDINARY TWEEZERS MAY LOOK AS THOUGH THEY'RE WELL DESIGNED FOR PLUCKING HAIRS.
SEEING IS BELIEVING —TRY THEM ON THE HAIR ON YOUR ARM.
MOREOVER, BECAUSE THE FORCE IS DISTRIBUTED ACROSS THAT BROAD SURFACE, EVEN FINE HAIRS CAN BE PULLED OUT SMOOTHLY WITHOUT BEING CUT.
MEANWHILE, KENRYO-MADE TWEEZERS HAVE A LARGE CONTACT AREA, SO THEY GRIP FIRMLY WITHOUT SLIPPING OR MISALIGNING.
17
THERE ARE FEWER MASTER CRAFTSMEN LIKE THAT NOWADAYS. THAT'S WHY THESE KENRYO-MADE TWEEZERS ARE SO HARD TO COME BY.
MAKING THESE TIPS MEET PERFECTLY ACROSS SUCH A BROAD SURFACE, WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST GAP, REQUIRES TREMENDOUS SKILL.
THE FINE FACIAL HAIRS ON A WOMAN ARE VERY THIN, AREN'T THEY? THESE KENRYO-MADE TWEEZERS CAN PLUCK EVEN SUCH FINE HAIRS CLEANLY.
WOW, I'M AMAZED!

DON'T USE IT FOR REMOVING FISH BONES, ALL RIGHT?
IT CAN'T BE HELPED. TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT.

O-OF COURSE I WOULDN'T DO THAT!

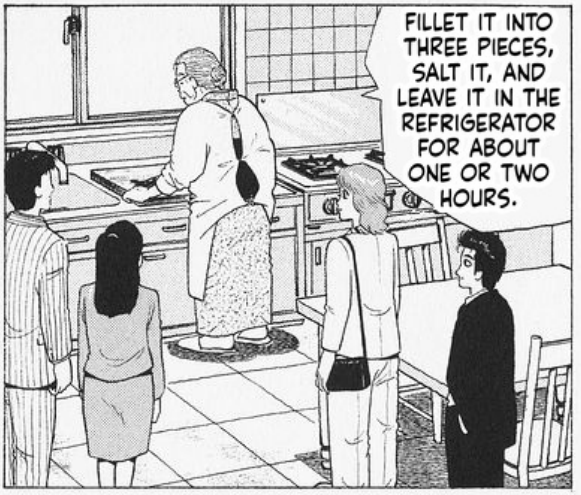
PLEASE —THIS IS ALSO TO HELP SOMEONE IN NEED.
KNOWING THAT MUCH AND STILL ASKING ME TO GIVE YOU THIS, MR. YAMAOKA, MAKES YOU A BAD MAN.

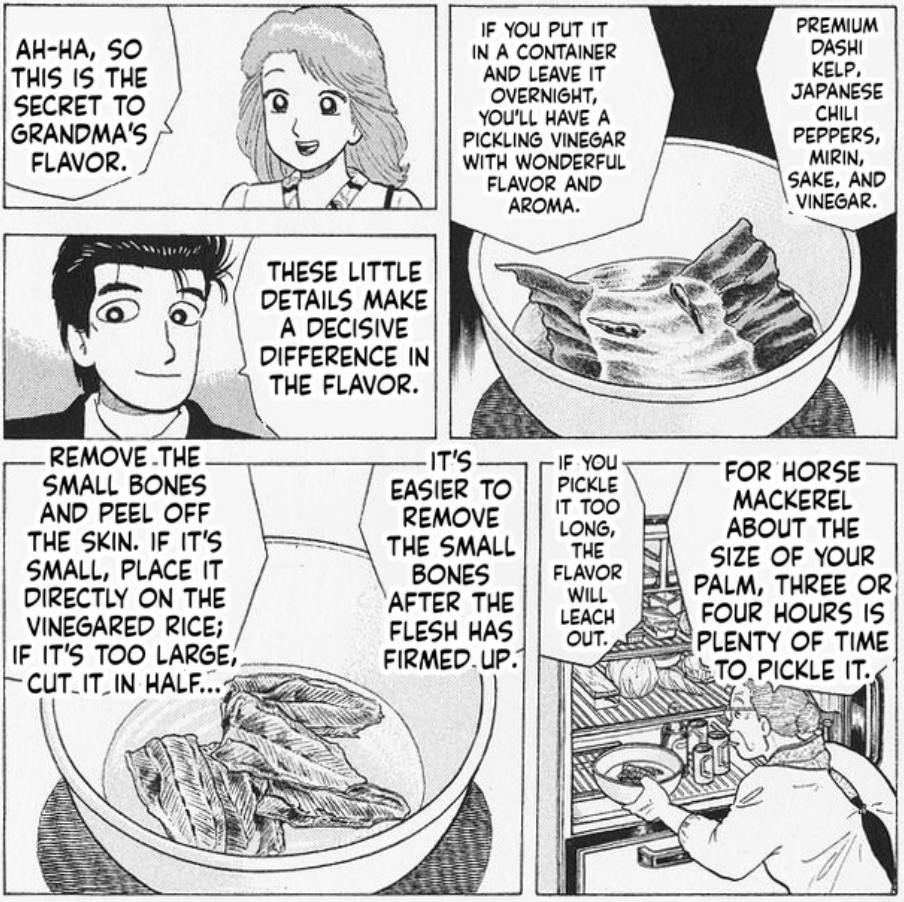

SMALL HORSE MACKEREL THAT FIT IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND MAKE THE TASTIEST PRESSED SUSHI.

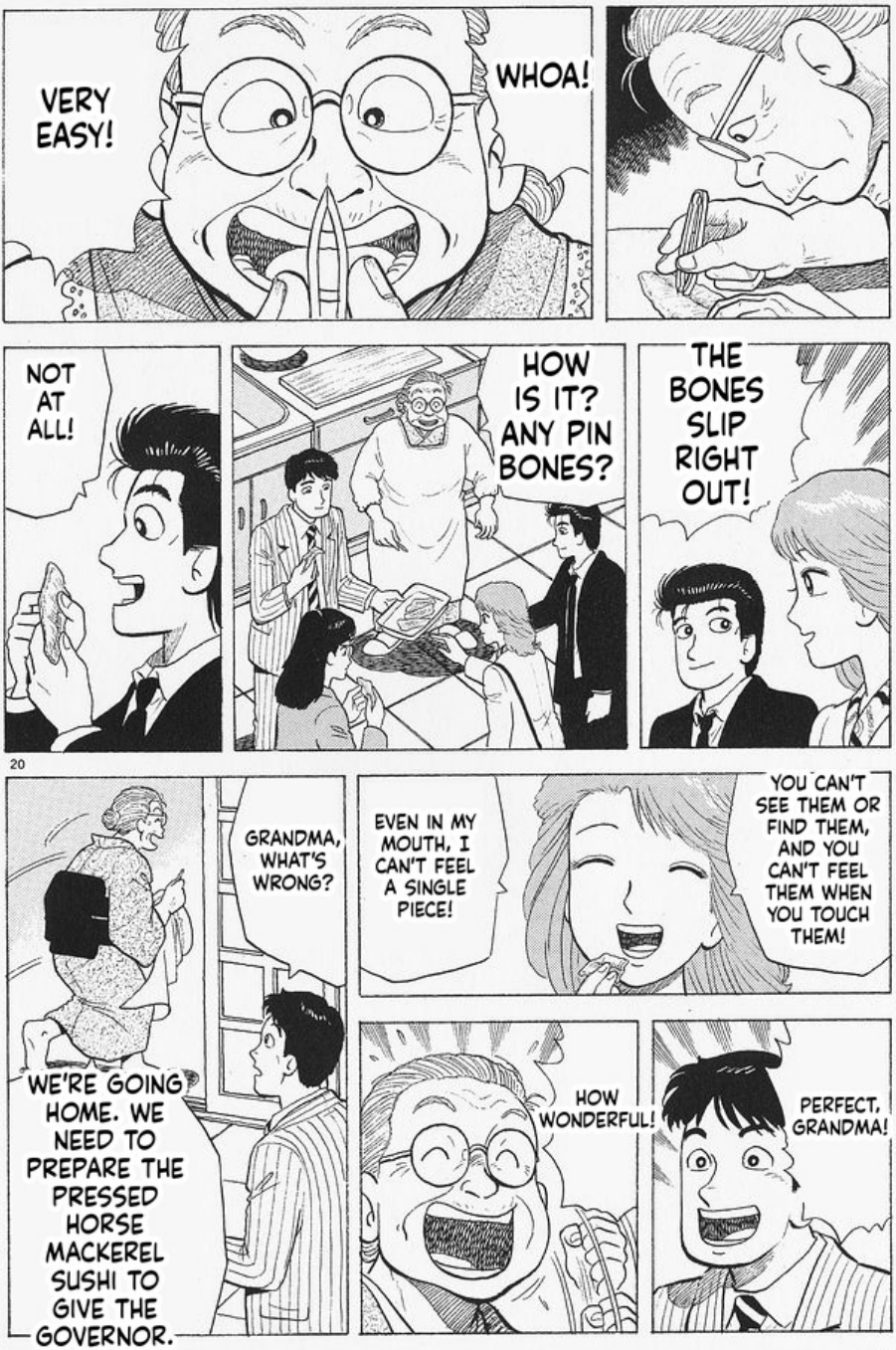


18

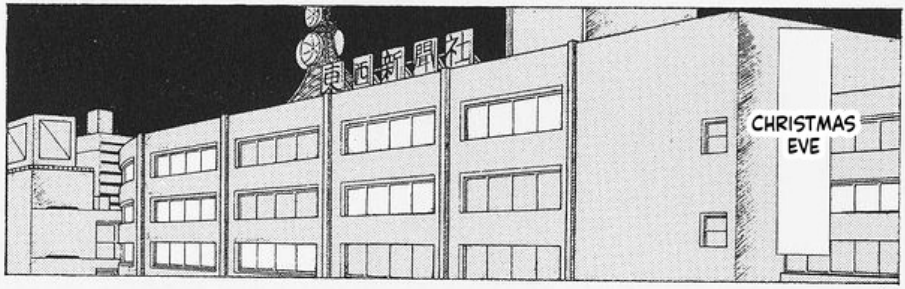
IN MY CASE, I PREPARE THIS VINEGAR THE NIGHT BEFORE.
AFTER RINSING OFF THE SALT, SOAK IT IN VINEGAR.


FILLET IT INTO THREE PIECES, SALT IT, AND LEAVE IT IN THE REFRIGERATOR FOR ABOUT ONE OR TWO HOURS.


AH-HA, SO THIS IS THE SECRET TO GRANDMA'S FLAVOR.
IF YOU PUT IT IN A CONTAINER AND LEAVE IT OVERNIGHT, YOU'LL HAVE A PICKLING VINEGAR WITH WONDERFUL FLAVOR AND AROMA.
PREMIUM DASHI KELP, JAPANESE CHILI PEPPERS, MIRIN, SAKE, AND VINEGAR.
THESE LITTLE DETAILS MAKE A DECISIVE DIFFERENCE IN THE FLAVOR.
REMOVE THE SMALL BONES AND PEEL OFF THE SKIN. IF IT'S SMALL, PLACE IT DIRECTLY ON THE VINEGARED RICE; IF IT'S TOO LARGE, CUT IT IN HALF...
IT'S EASIER TO REMOVE THE SMALL BONES AFTER THE FLESH HAS FIRMED UP.
IF YOU PICKLE IT TOO LONG, THE FLAVOR WILL LEACH OUT.
FOR HORSE MACKEREL ABOUT THE SIZE OF YOUR PALM, THREE OR FOUR HOURS IS PLENTY OF TIME TO PICKLE IT.
19
NOW TO CHANGE MY GLASSES...
I WONDER IF IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT...
HERE, TRY IT WITH THESE.
FIRST, WE REMOVE THE BONES...

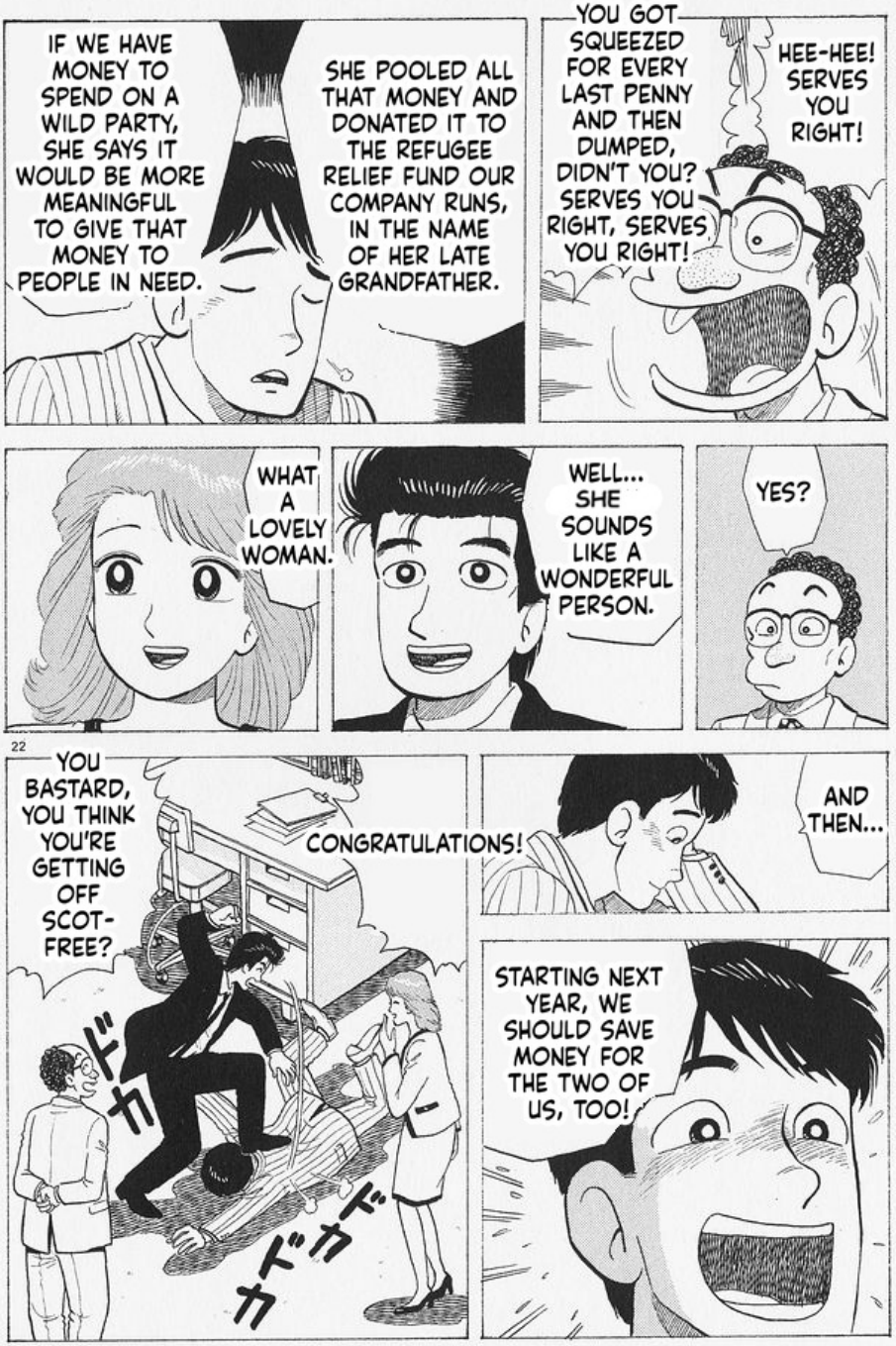

VERY EASY!
WHOA!
NOT AT ALL!
HOW IS IT? ANY PIN BONES?
THE BONES SLIP RIGHT OUT!
20
GRANDMA, WHAT'S WRONG?
WE'RE GOING HOME. WE NEED TO PREPARE THE PRESSED HORSE MACKEREL SUSHI TO GIVE THE GOVERNOR.
EVEN IN MY MOUTH, I CAN'T FEEL A SINGLE PIECE!
YOU CAN'T SEE THEM OR FIND THEM, AND YOU CAN'T FEEL THEM WHEN YOU TOUCH THEM!
HOW WONDERFUL!
PERFECT, GRANDMA!

I'LL WASH IT IN HOT WATER, DRY IT THOROUGHLY, APPLY RUST-PREVENTIVE OIL, PUT IT IN THE SAFE, AND NEVER LET ANYONE TOUCH IT!
WONDERFUL! THEY'RE MAGICAL TWEEZERS! THEY'RE MY TREASURE!


CHRISTMAS EVE

21

CANCELED!
EVERYTHING'S CANCELED.
HUH? NAKAMOTO, WHAT'S WRONG?
SHE EVEN MADE ME RETURN THE RUBY RING I BOUGHT.
SHE DEMANDED THE MONEY THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE USED FOR THE RESTAURANT...
AREN'T YOU GOING TO THE RESTAURANT WITH MIOKO?


IF WE HAVE MONEY TO SPEND ON A WILD PARTY, SHE SAYS IT WOULD BE MORE MEANINGFUL TO GIVE THAT MONEY TO PEOPLE IN NEED.
SHE POOLED ALL THAT MONEY AND DONATED IT TO THE REFUGEE RELIEF FUND OUR COMPANY RUNS, IN THE NAME OF HER LATE GRANDFATHER.
YOU GOT SQUEEZED FOR EVERY LAST PENNY AND THEN DUMPED, DIDN'T YOU? SERVES YOU RIGHT, SERVES YOU RIGHT!
HEE-HEE! SERVES YOU RIGHT!
WHAT A LOVELY WOMAN.
WELL... SHE SOUNDS LIKE A WONDERFUL PERSON.
YES?
22
YOU BASTARD, YOU THINK YOU'RE GETTING OFF SCOT-FREE?
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CONGRATULATIONS!
AND THEN...
STARTING NEXT YEAR, WE SHOULD SAVE MONEY FOR THE TWO OF US, TOO!

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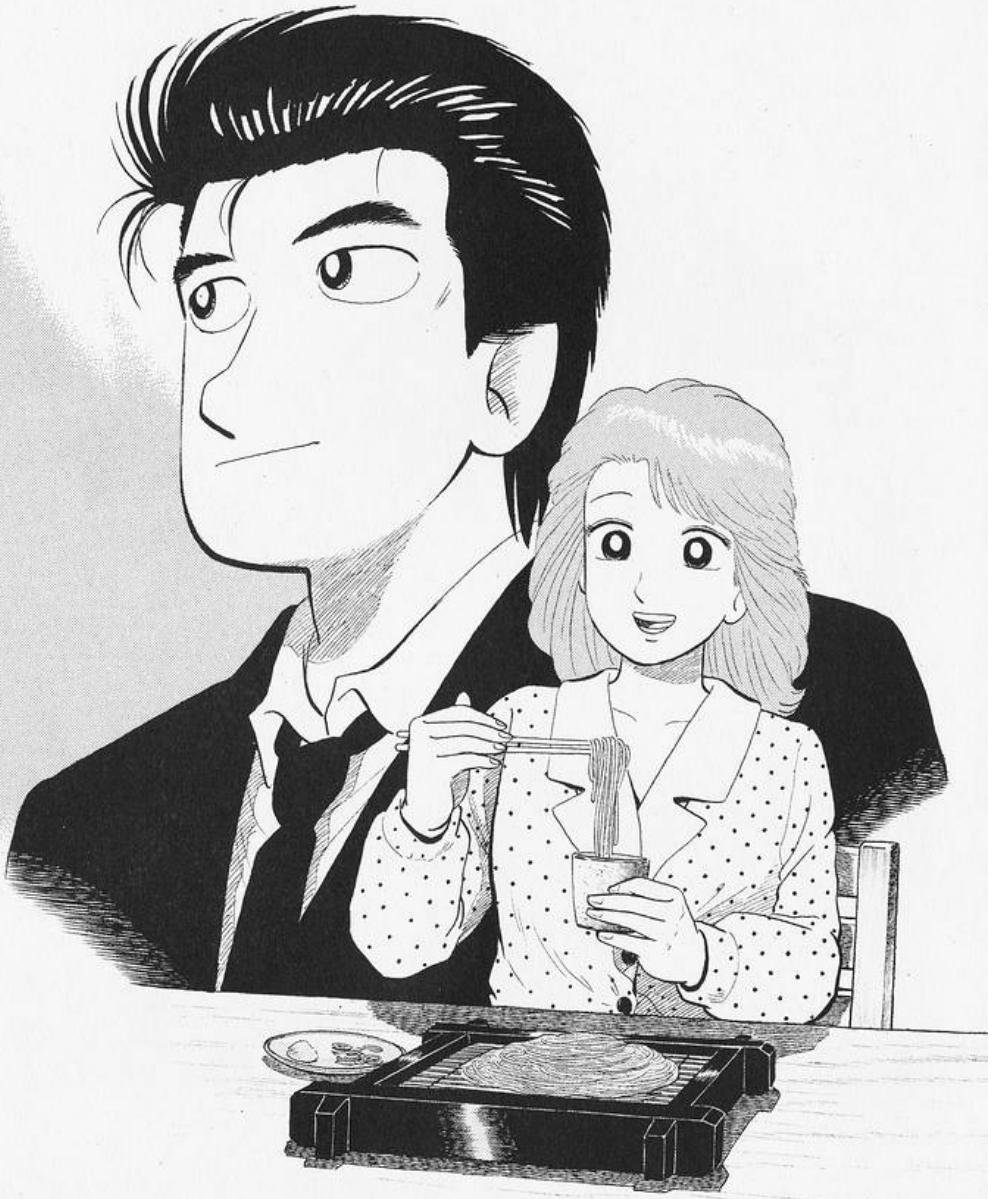


WELL... SHALL WE GO TO SOME SMALL TEMPLE AND ASK TO RING THE NEW YEAR'S EVE BELL?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING ON NEW YEAR'S EVE?

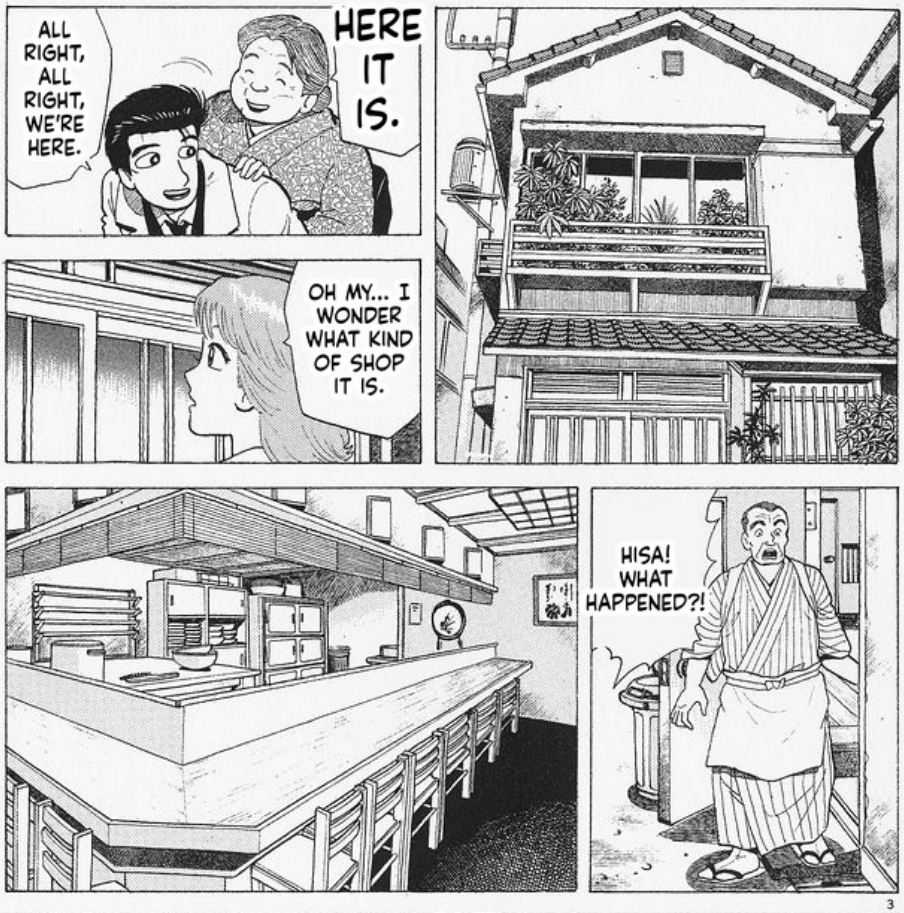
AND AS EXPECTED, WE'LL VISIT A SMALL SHRINE WITH FEW WORSHIPPERS FOR OUR FIRST SHRINE VISIT OF THE YEAR.
SOUNDS GOOD.

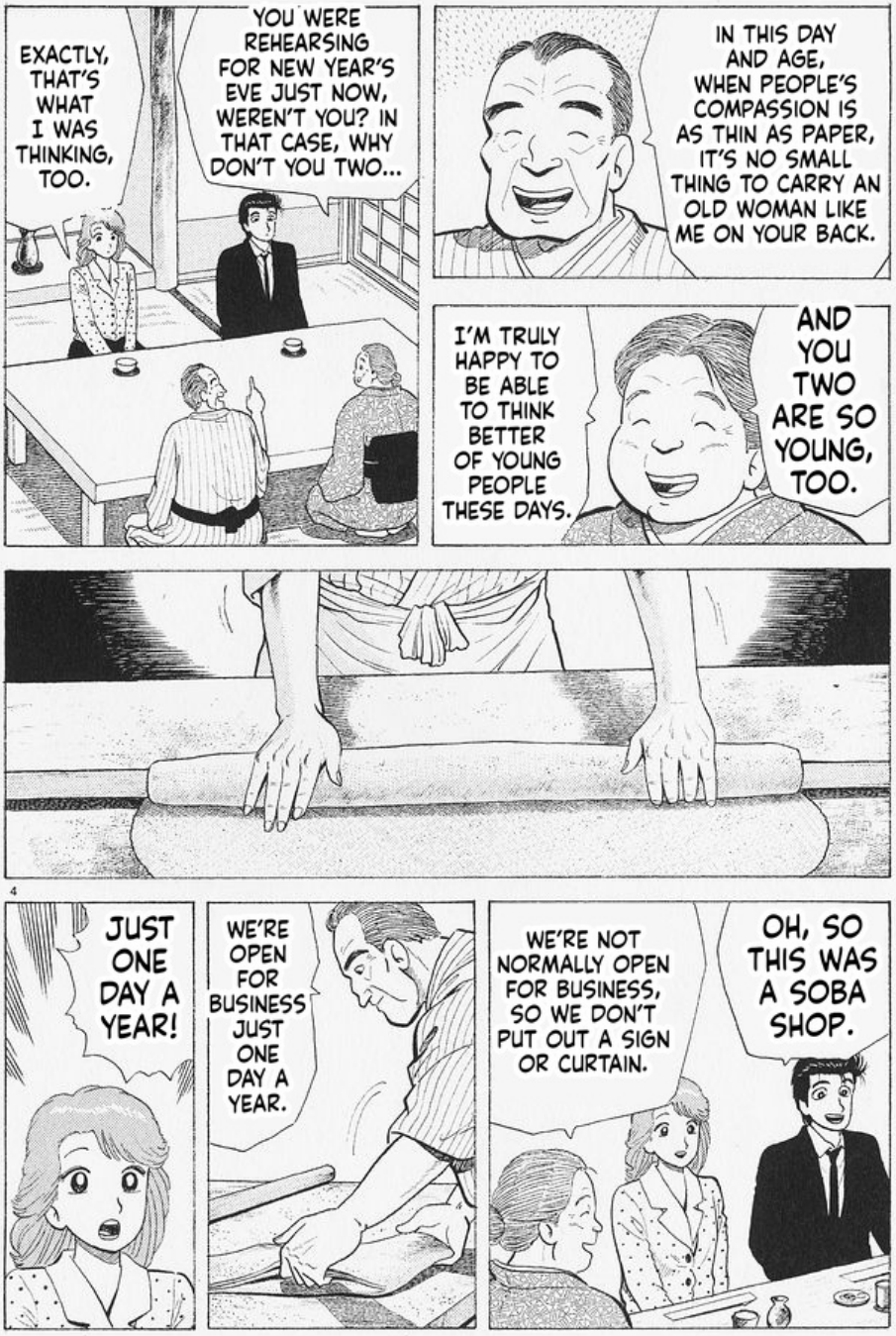
I'M TRULY SORRY TO HAVE IMPOSED ON A COMPLETE STRANGER LIKE THIS...

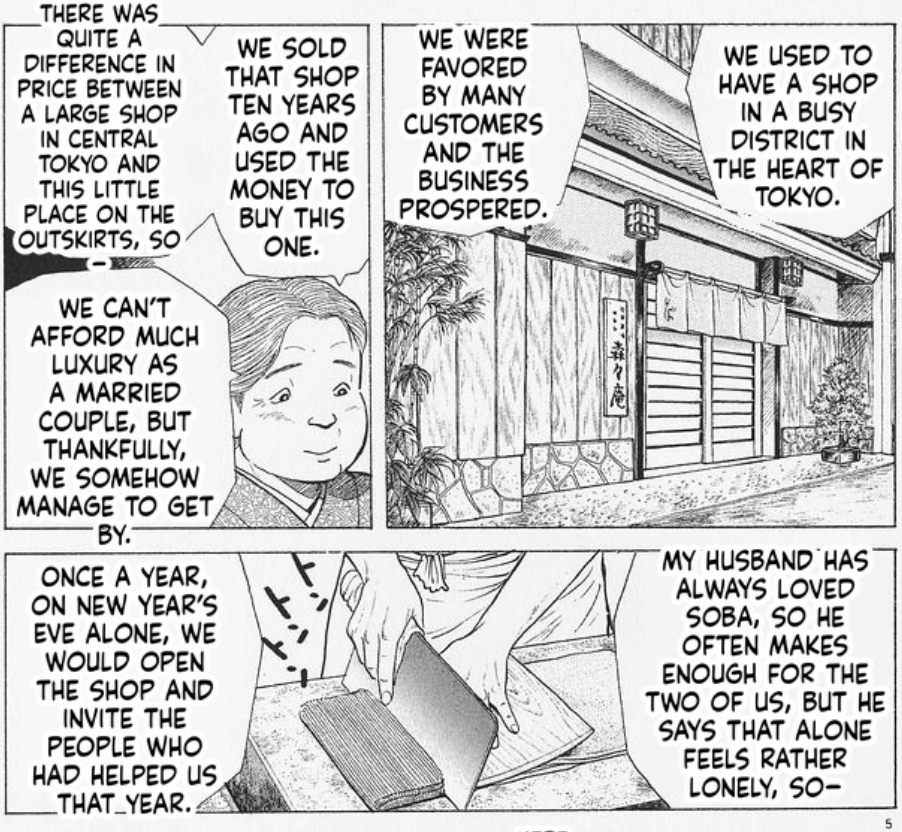
THE BAGS WERE HEAVY, AND I GOT TIRED.
I GOT GREEDY AND BOUGHT ALL SORTS OF THINGS.

PREPARING FOR NEW YEAR'S? THAT SOUNDS FUN.

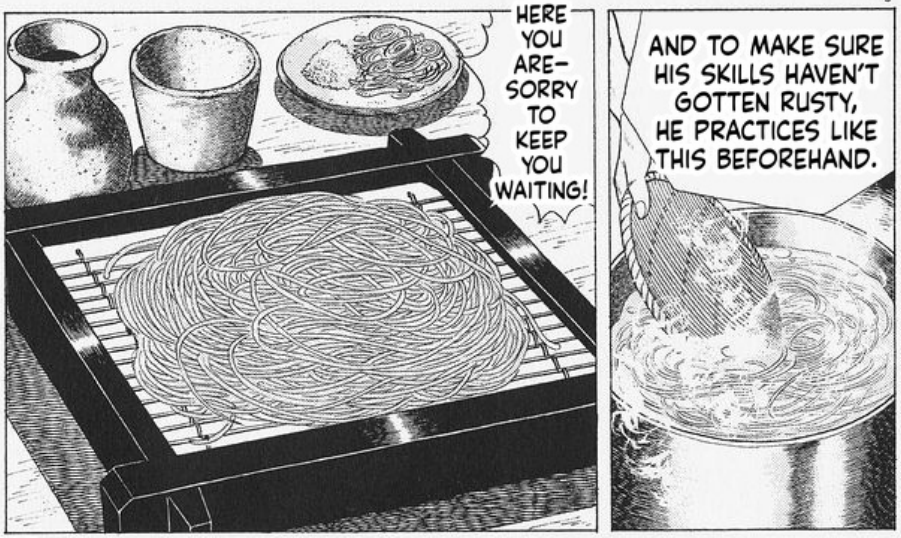
IT'S NOTHING, REALLY.


ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, WE'RE HERE.
HERE IT IS.
OH MY... I WONDER WHAT KIND OF SHOP IT IS.
HISA! WHAT HAPPENED?!
3
IF YOU PUT IT THAT WAY, YOU'RE ONLY EMBARRASSING ME.
DON'T MAKE SUCH A BIG DEAL OF IT.
MY WIFE HAS BEEN IN YOUR CARE, AND I HARDLY KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU...


EXACTLY, THAT'S WHAT I WAS THINKING, TOO.
YOU WERE REHEARSING FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE JUST NOW, WEREN'T YOU? IN THAT CASE, WHY DON'T YOU TWO...
IN THIS DAY AND AGE, WHEN PEOPLE'S COMPASSION IS AS THIN AS PAPER, IT'S NO SMALL THING TO CARRY AN OLD WOMAN LIKE ME ON YOUR BACK.
I'M TRULY HAPPY TO BE ABLE TO THINK BETTER OF YOUNG PEOPLE THESE DAYS.
AND YOU TWO ARE SO YOUNG, TOO.
4
JUST ONE DAY A YEAR!
WE'RE OPEN FOR BUSINESS JUST ONE DAY A YEAR.
WE'RE NOT NORMALLY OPEN FOR BUSINESS, SO WE DON'T PUT OUT A SIGN OR CURTAIN.
OH, SO THIS WAS A SOBA SHOP.


THERE WAS QUITE A DIFFERENCE IN PRICE BETWEEN A LARGE SHOP IN CENTRAL TOKYO AND THIS LITTLE PLACE ON THE OUTSKIRTS, SO—
WE SOLD THAT SHOP TEN YEARS AGO AND USED THE MONEY TO BUY THIS ONE.
WE CAN'T AFFORD MUCH LUXURY AS A MARRIED COUPLE, BUT THANKFULLY, WE SOMEHOW MANAGE TO GET BY.
WE USED TO HAVE A SHOP IN A BUSY DISTRICT IN THE HEART OF TOKYO.
WE WERE FAVORED BY MANY CUSTOMERS AND THE BUSINESS PROSPERED.
ONCE A YEAR, ON NEW YEAR'S EVE ALONE, WE WOULD OPEN THE SHOP AND INVITE THE PEOPLE WHO HAD HELPED US THAT YEAR.
MY HUSBAND HAS ALWAYS LOVED SOBA, SO HE OFTEN MAKES ENOUGH FOR THE TWO OF US, BUT HE SAYS THAT ALONE FEELS RATHER LONELY, SO—

5


HERE YOU ARE— SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING!
AND TO MAKE SURE HIS SKILLS HAVEN'T GOTTEN RUSTY, HE PRACTICES LIKE THIS BEFOREHAND.

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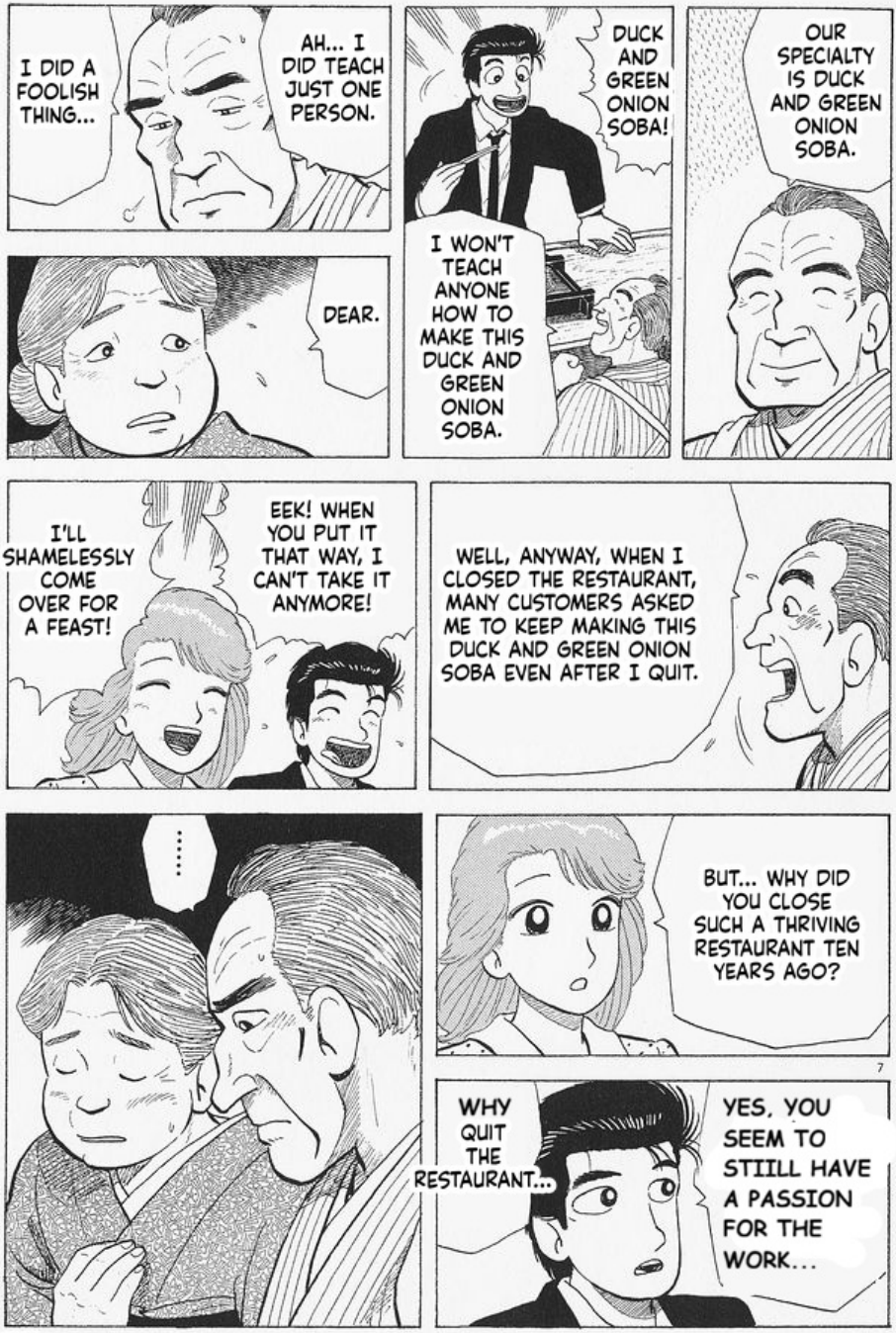
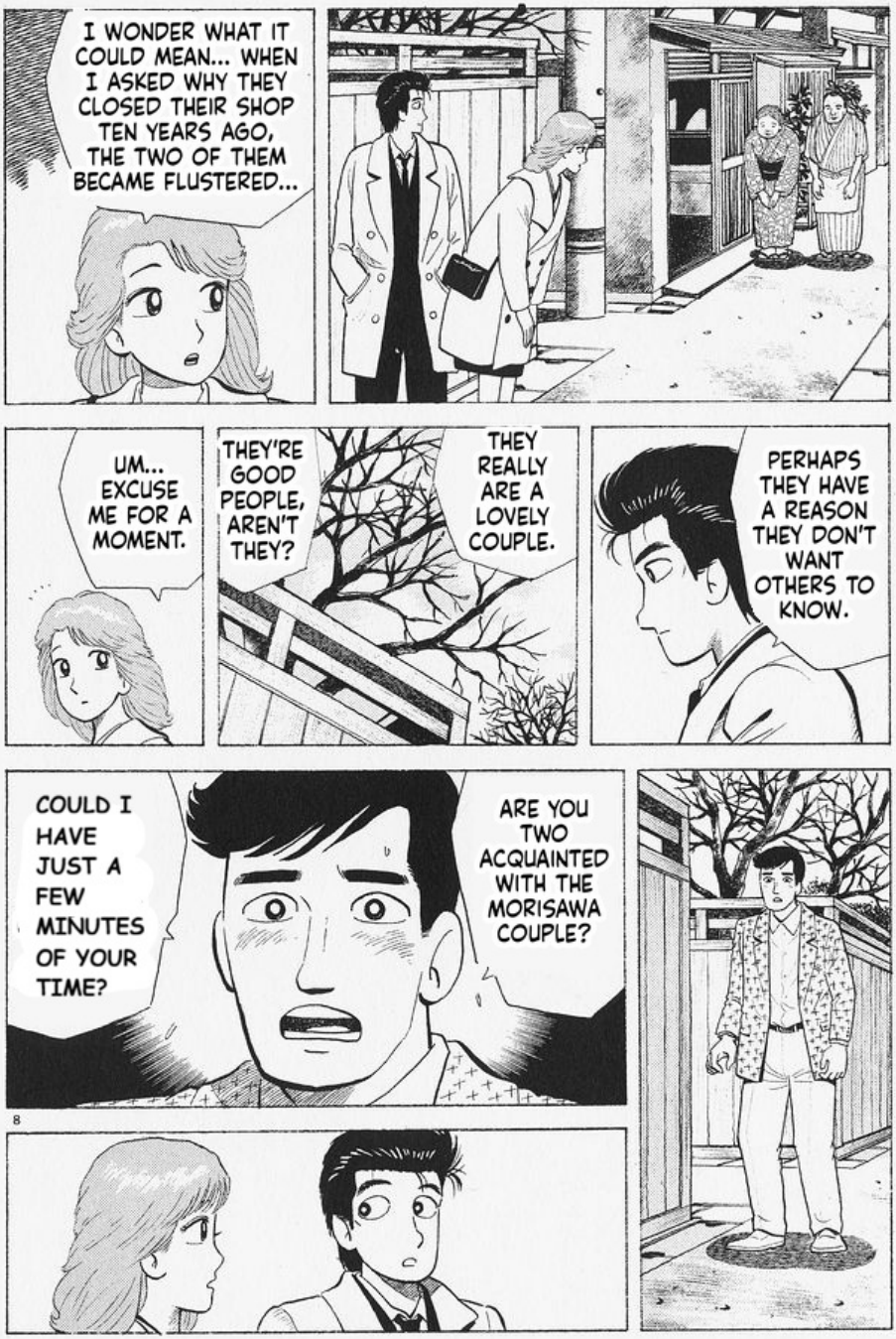
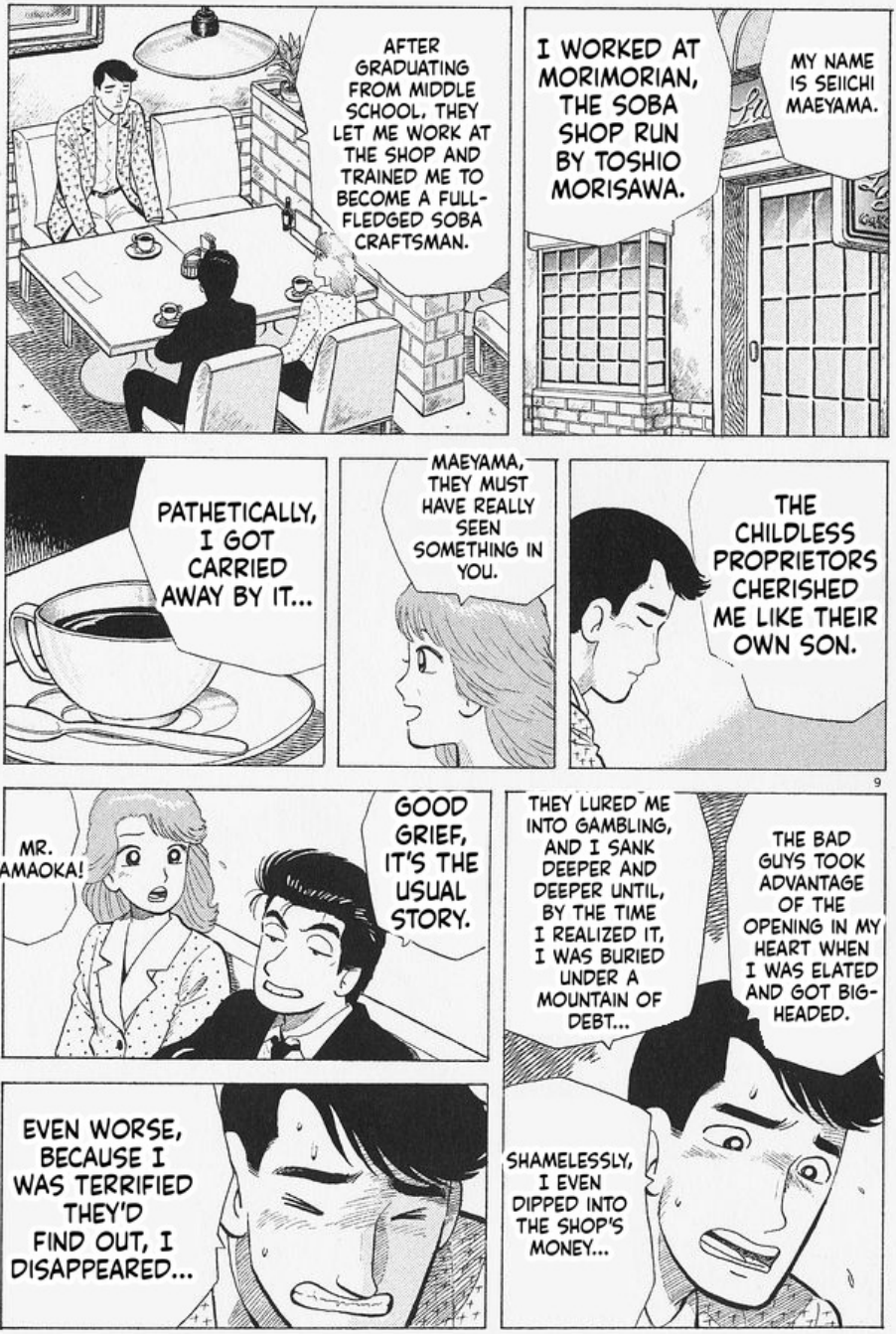
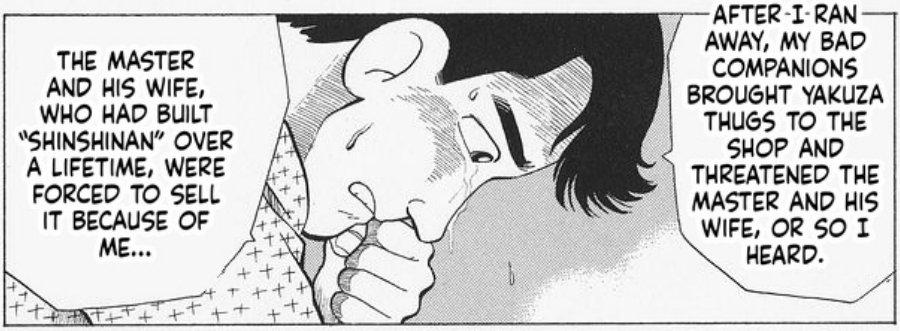
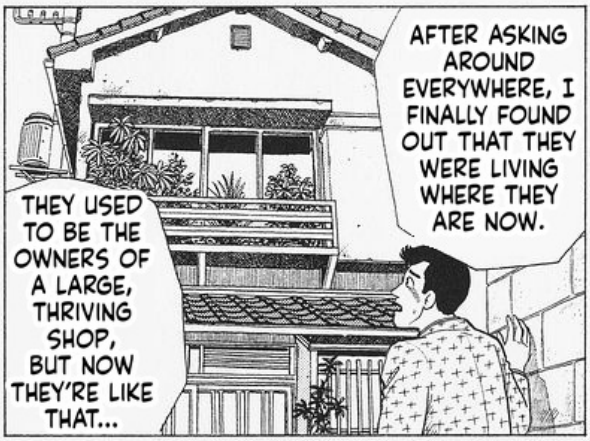
LET'S DIG IN.
WOW, WHAT A WONDERFUL AROMA.
MY, WHAT A DELIGHTFUL APPETITE.
ズー！ズ〜
MMM! THIS IS DELICIOUS!
COULDN'T BE BETTER!
REFRESHING AND VIBRANT IN FLAVOR, AROMA, AND TEXTURE!
6
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? WE'D BE SO HAPPY TO HAVE YOU TWO COME OVER.
I HOPE WE'RE NOT INTRUDING.
HEHE, IS THIS REALLY OKAY?
HOW ABOUT IT? IF YOU'RE FREE, WOULD YOU COME OVER ON NEW YEAR'S EVE?


I DID A FOOLISH THING...
AH... I DID TEACH JUST ONE PERSON.
DUCK AND GREEN ONION SOBA!
I WON'T TEACH ANYONE HOW TO MAKE THIS DUCK AND GREEN ONION SOBA.
OUR SPECIALTY IS DUCK AND GREEN ONION SOBA.
DEAR.
I'LL SHAMELESSLY COME OVER FOR A FEAST!
EEK! WHEN YOU PUT IT THAT WAY, I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE!
WELL, ANYWAY, WHEN I CLOSED THE RESTAURANT, MANY CUSTOMERS ASKED ME TO KEEP MAKING THIS DUCK AND GREEN ONION SOBA EVEN AFTER I QUIT.
.....
BUT... WHY DID YOU CLOSE SUCH A THRIVING RESTAURANT TEN YEARS AGO?
7
WHY QUIT THE RESTAURANT...
YES, YOU SEEM TO STIILL HAVE A PASSION FOR THE WORK...


I WONDER WHAT IT COULD MEAN... WHEN I ASKED WHY THEY CLOSED THEIR SHOP TEN YEARS AGO, THE TWO OF THEM BECAME FLUSTERED...
UM... EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT.
THEY'RE GOOD PEOPLE, AREN'T THEY?
THEY REALLY ARE A LOVELY COUPLE.
PERHAPS THEY HAVE A REASON THEY DON'T WANT OTHERS TO KNOW.
COULD I HAVE JUST A FEW MINUTES OF YOUR TIME?
ARE YOU TWO ACQUAINTED WITH THE MORISAWA COUPLE?
8


AFTER GRADUATING FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL, THEY LET ME WORK AT THE SHOP AND TRAINED ME TO BECOME A FULL-FLEDGED SOBA CRAFTSMAN.
I WORKED AT MORIMORIAN, THE SOBA SHOP RUN BY TOSHIO MORISAWA.
MY NAME IS SEIICHI MAEYAMA.
PATHETICALLY, I GOT CARRIED AWAY BY IT...
MAEYAMA, THEY MUST HAVE REALLY SEEN SOMETHING IN YOU.
THE CHILDLESS PROPRIETORS CHERISHED ME LIKE THEIR OWN SON.
9
MR. YAMAOKA!
GOOD GRIEF, IT'S THE USUAL STORY.
THEY LURED ME INTO GAMBLING, AND I SANK DEEPER AND DEEPER UNTIL, BY THE TIME I REALIZED IT, I WAS BURIED UNDER A MOUNTAIN OF DEBT...
THE BAD GUYS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE OPENING IN MY HEART WHEN I WAS ELATED AND GOT BIG-HEADED.
EVEN WORSE, BECAUSE I WAS TERRIFIED THEY'D FIND OUT, I DISAPPEARED...
SHAMELESSLY, I EVEN DIPPED INTO THE SHOP'S MONEY...


THE MASTER AND HIS WIFE, WHO HAD BUILT "SHINSHINAN" OVER A LIFETIME, WERE FORCED TO SELL IT BECAUSE OF ME...
AFTER I RAN AWAY, MY BAD COMPANIONS BROUGHT YAKUZA THUGS TO THE SHOP AND THREATENED THE MASTER AND HIS WIFE, OR SO I HEARD.

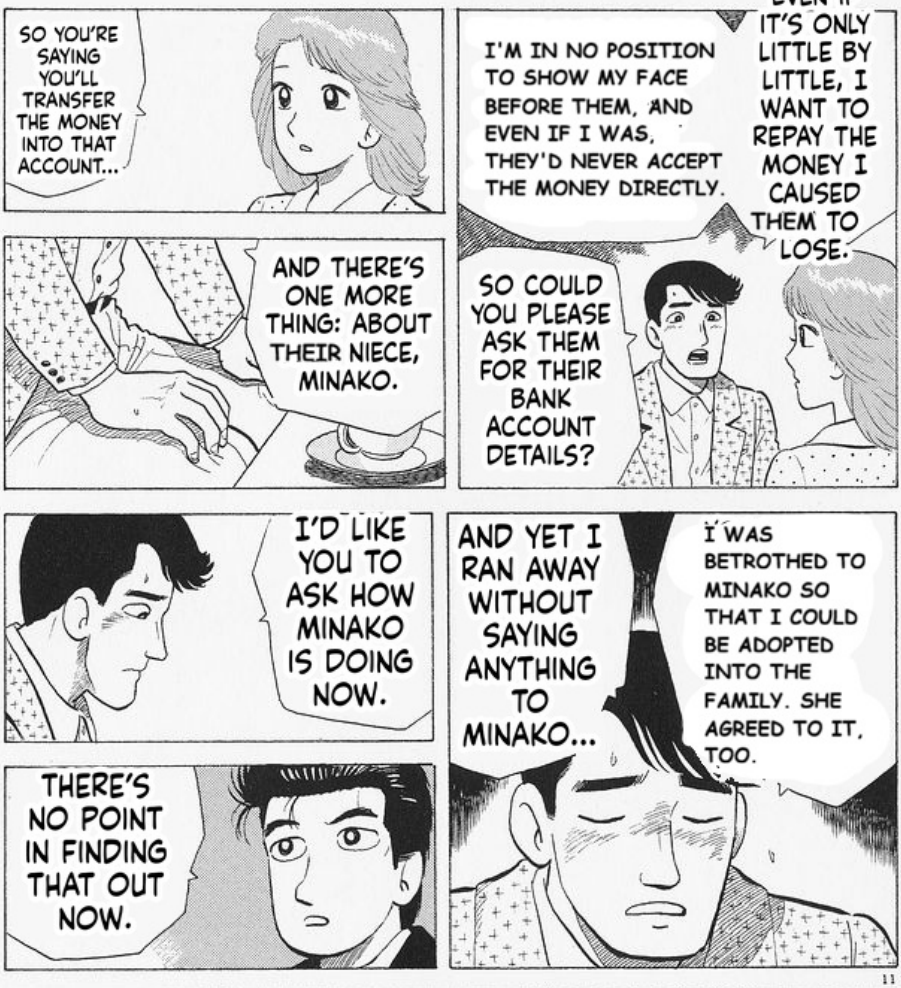

AFTER ASKING AROUND EVERYWHERE, I FINALLY FOUND OUT THAT THEY WERE LIVING WHERE THEY ARE NOW.
THEY USED TO BE THE OWNERS OF A LARGE, THRIVING SHOP, BUT NOW THEY'RE LIKE THAT...

10

YES, AFTER THAT, I STARTED OVER FROM SCRATCH AT ANOTHER SHOP, AND NOW THEY'VE ENTRUSTED ME WITH A BRANCH.

THEY COULD HAVE LIVED IN LUXURY...
IF THEY DIDN'T TAKE OVER MY DEBT, THEY'D BUY AN EVEN FINER MANSION IN A BETTER LOCATION,

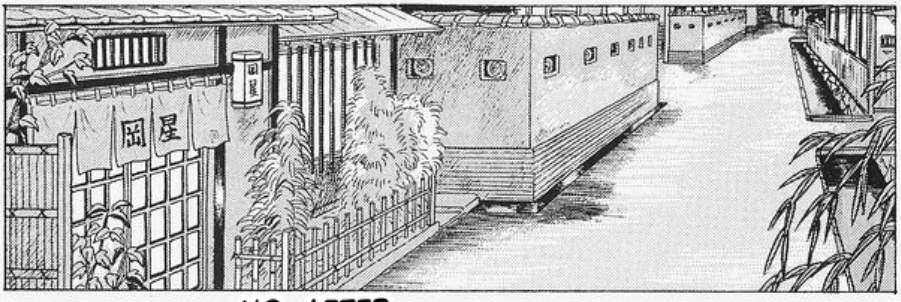
SO, WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM US?


SO YOU'RE SAYING YOU'LL TRANSFER THE MONEY INTO THAT ACCOUNT...
AND THERE'S ONE MORE THING: ABOUT THEIR NIECE, MINAKO.
I'M IN NO POSITION TO SHOW MY FACE BEFORE THEM, AND EVEN IF I WAS, THEY'D NEVER ACCEPT THE MONEY DIRECTLY.
EVEN IF IT'S ONLY LITTLE BY LITTLE, I WANT TO REPAY THE MONEY I CAUSED THEM TO LOSE.
SO COULD YOU PLEASE ASK THEM FOR THEIR BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS?
I'D LIKE YOU TO ASK HOW MINAKO IS DOING NOW.
THERE'S NO POINT IN FINDING THAT OUT NOW.
AND YET I RAN AWAY WITHOUT SAYING ANYTHING TO MINAKO...
I WAS BETROTHED TO MINAKO SO THAT I COULD BE ADOPTED INTO THE FAMILY. SHE AGREED TO IT, TOO.
11
UGH...
HOW SELFISH.
I WANT TO KNOW! IF MINAKO IS MARRIED AND HAPPY, I'LL BE ABLE TO REST EASY TOO!

WHAT! THAT'S HER!
MINAKO-SAN!
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR ME, I'M RIGHT HERE.
MINAKO-SAN... WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE...?
I SAW YOU TALKING WITH THOSE TWO THERE.
I WAS ON MY WAY TO MY UNCLE AND AUNT'S PLACE.
12
MINAKO-SAN IS...
ARE YOU KIDDING? IF I SKIPPED TOWN LEAVING DEBTS BEHIND AND THEN MARRIED ANOTHER WOMAN, I'D BE NOTHING BUT A BEAST.
SEIICHI-SAN, YOUR WIFE...

MINAKO, I'M SORRY...
I WISH SHE'D BEEN STRONG ENOUGH TO LOOK FOR ANOTHER MAN EVEN AFTER THE MAN SHE WAS SUPPOSED TO MARRY RAN AWAY...
THEY'RE THAT ANGRY, HUH... IT'S UNDERSTANDABLE...
WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
THEY'D NEVER ACCEPT THE MONEY.
UNCLE AND AUNT PROBABLY WON'T AGREE TO MEET SEIICHI.
13
IT MADE ME SAD, AND I WAS ANGRY TOO...
.....
MINAKO, ARE YOU GOING TO FORGIVE MAEYAMA?

MINAKO.
MOST IMPORTANTLY, HE CAME BACK BECAUSE HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT ME, MY UNCLE, AND MY AUNT.
BUT AFTER HEARING THE WHOLE STORY, I REALIZED THAT SEIICHI HAD SUFFERED TOO, AND HAD WORKED HARD TO RECOVER.
I FORGIVE YOU.
HUH?!
THEN I DON'T THINK IT SHOULD BE ALL THAT DIFFICULT.
HE CARED SO MUCH ABOUT ME, AND YET...
THAT'S RIGHT. HE WOULDN'T TELL ANYONE ELSE, BUT HE TOLD ME.
MORISAWA SAID THERE WAS ONLY ONE PERSON HE EVER TAUGHT HOW TO MAKE HIS PRIZED KAMO-NANBAN. WAS THAT PERSON MAEYAMA?
14
HUH?
ALL RIGHT, THEN IT'S A CONTEST.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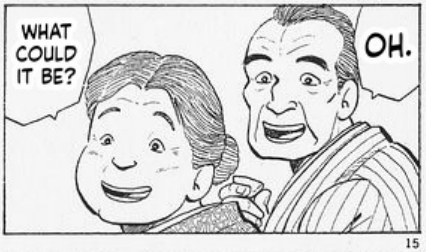
NO, AFTER TREATING ME TO SUCH DELICIOUS SOBA, I SIMPLY COULDN'T LEAVE IT AT THAT.

BESIDES, THERE'S SOMETHING I'D REALLY LIKE THE MORISAWA COUPLE TO TRY.

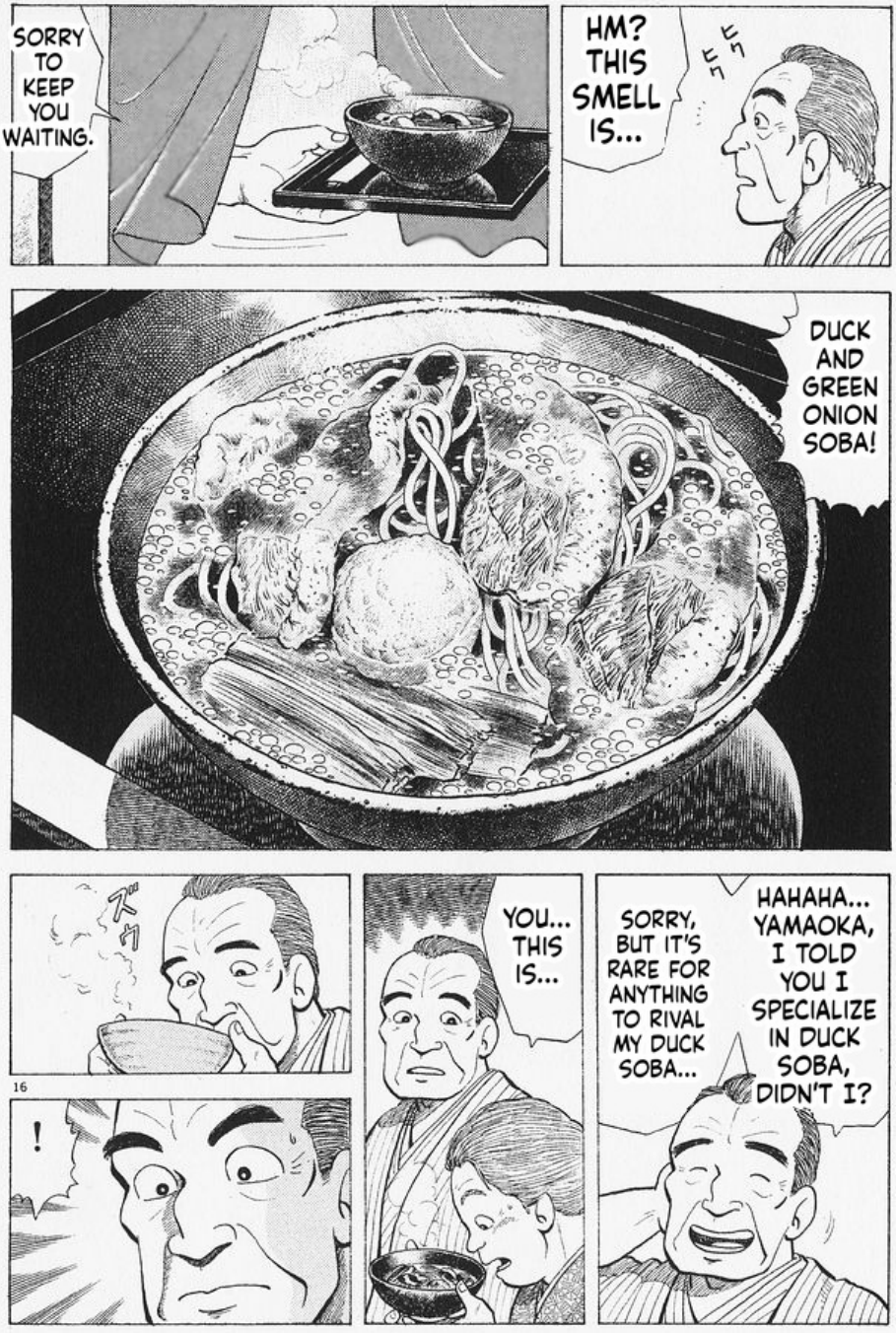
HONESTLY, THIS HAS EVERYTHING BACKWARD.
NO, I FEEL BAD LETTING THE TWO OF YOU TREAT ME.

YES.
START PREP!

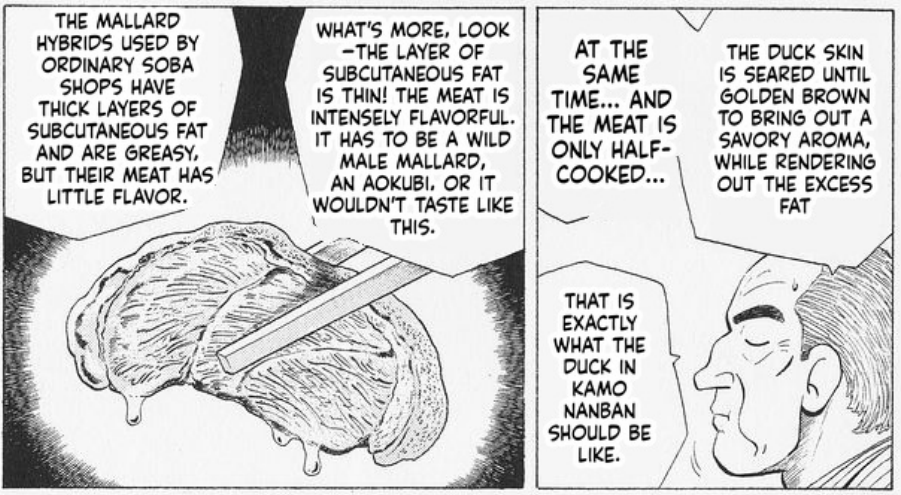

WHAT COULD IT BE?
OH.

15

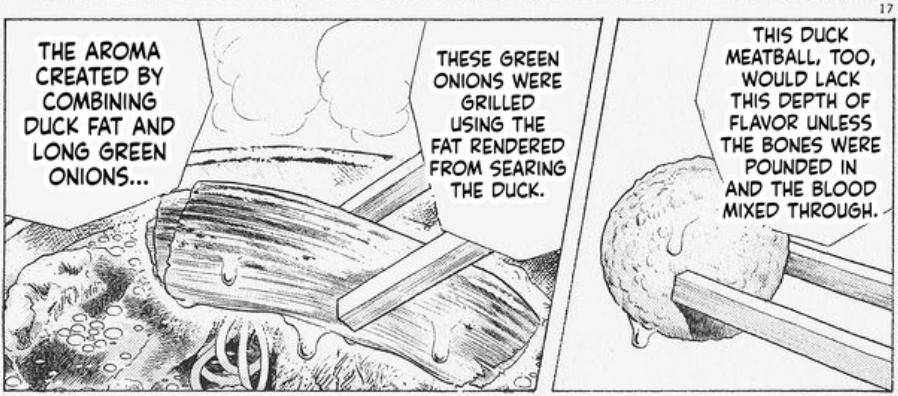
LATER.


SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING.
HM? THIS SMELL IS...
スン
DUCK AND GREEN ONION SOBA!
ズゥ
16
!
YOU... THIS IS...
SORRY, BUT IT'S RARE FOR ANYTHING TO RIVAL MY DUCK SOBA...
HAHAHA... YAMAOKA, I TOLD YOU I SPECIALIZE IN DUCK SOBA, DIDN'T I?

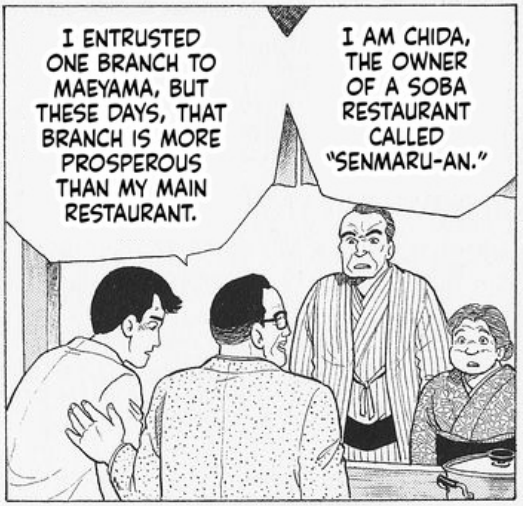
THIS TASTES EXACTLY LIKE YOUR BROTH!
THE BROTH, MADE RICH WITH DRIED BONITO AND DRIED MACKEREL, HAS DUCK STOCK ADDED TO IT...
AND THIS RICH FLAVOR IS IMPOSSIBLE UNLESS THE WHOLE DUCK IS MINCED.


THE MALLARD HYBRIDS USED BY ORDINARY SOBA SHOPS HAVE THICK LAYERS OF SUBCUTANEOUS FAT AND ARE GREASY, BUT THEIR MEAT HAS LITTLE FLAVOR.
WHAT'S MORE, LOOK —THE LAYER OF SUBCUTANEOUS FAT IS THIN! THE MEAT IS INTENSELY FLAVORFUL. IT HAS TO BE A WILD MALE MALLARD, AN AOKUBI, OR IT WOULDN'T TASTE LIKE THIS.
AT THE SAME TIME... AND THE MEAT IS ONLY HALF-COOKED...
THE DUCK SKIN IS SEARED UNTIL GOLDEN BROWN TO BRING OUT A SAVORY AROMA, WHILE RENDERING OUT THE EXCESS FAT
THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT THE DUCK IN KAMO NANBAN SHOULD BE LIKE.

17

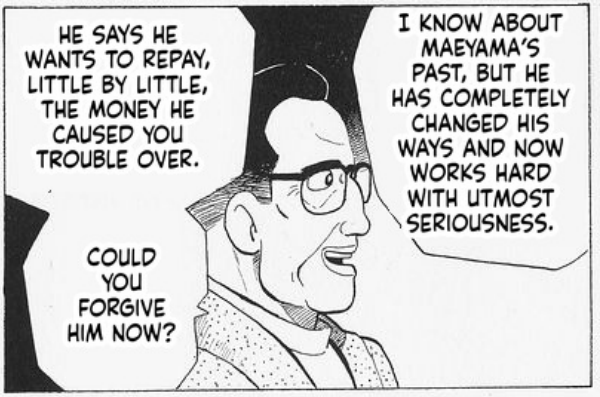

THE AROMA CREATED BY COMBINING DUCK FAT AND LONG GREEN ONIONS...
THESE GREEN ONIONS WERE GRILLED USING THE FAT RENDERED FROM SEARING THE DUCK.
THIS DUCK MEATBALL, TOO, WOULD LACK THIS DEPTH OF FLAVOR UNLESS THE BONES WERE POUNDED IN AND THE BLOOD MIXED THROUGH.

IF IT'S THICK, IT'LL BE HEAVY AND CLUMSY, RUINING EVERYTHING. YOU HAVE TO MAKE IT THIN AND CRISP, LIKE THIS.
TO STAND UP TO THE DUCK'S STRONG FLAVOR, USE WHOLE-GROUND BUCKWHEAT FLOUR.
ズズ
HEY, SEIICHI! GET OUT HERE!
HOW MANY PEOPLE BESIDES ME CAN MAKE SOBA THIS GOOD...?
18
MAKING A MOCKERY OF ME— COPYING MY DUCK SOBA EXACTLY! ARE YOU TRYING TO MAKE A FOOL OF ME?!
WHAT THE HELL IS THE MEANING OF THIS?! YOU'VE GOT NO RIGHT TO SHOW YOUR FACE IN FRONT OF US!
M-MASTER! PROPRIETRESS!
WELL, SEIICHI!


I ENTRUSTED ONE BRANCH TO MAEYAMA, BUT THESE DAYS, THAT BRANCH IS MORE PROSPEROUS THAN MY MAIN RESTAURANT.
I AM CHIDA, THE OWNER OF A SOBA RESTAURANT CALLED "SENMARU-AN."

NO, MASTER, I...

PLEASE WAIT.

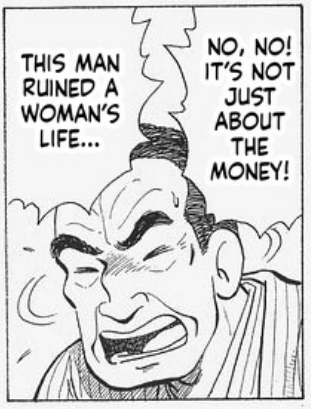

HE SAYS HE WANTS TO REPAY, LITTLE BY LITTLE, THE MONEY HE CAUSED YOU TROUBLE OVER.
I KNOW ABOUT MAEYAMA'S PAST, BUT HE HAS COMPLETELY CHANGED HIS WAYS AND NOW WORKS HARD WITH UTMOST SERIOUSNESS.
COULD YOU FORGIVE HIM NOW?

WHAT... SEIICHI...?
OH MY.

19

MINAKO!

UNCLE, AUNT, PLEASE FORGIVE SEIICHI.


THIS MAN RUINED A WOMAN'S LIFE...
NO, NO! IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT THE MONEY!

MINAKO!
BUT FOR THAT, WE NEED THE CONSENT OF THE MORISAWA COUPLE.
I WOULD LIKE TO SERVE AS MATCHMAKER FOR MAEYAMA AND MS. MINAKO...
WHAT ON EARTH...
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU SAYING?
MADAM.
BUT ONCE YOU TASTE THIS DUCK SOBA, YOU'LL SEE THAT IT'S TRUE—SEIICHI REALLY HAS RETURNED TO BEING A DECENT MAN...
20
NOT A CHANCE!
SO WHY NOT LET BYGONES BE BYGONES AND FORGIVE HIM?
YOU'RE GETTING OLD TOO. IT'S SEICHI AND MINAKO'S TIME NOW.
IT LOOKS JUST LIKE MY HUSBAND'S DUCK SOBA— NO, IT MIGHT EVEN BE TASTIER.
DON'T JOKE AROUND!

YES.
HEY, SEIICHI!
EXCUSE ME?!
IF YOU KEEP BEING SO STUBBORN, I'LL LEAVE YOU AND LIVE WITH SEIICHI AND MINAKO.
Y-YOU LITTLE...
UNCLE!
BOSS!
MAKE IT IN MY PLACE.
NEW YEAR'S EVE DUCK SOBA,
21
WITH MAEYAMA'S ABILITIES, THERE'S NO DOUBT HE CAN RESTORE THE MORIMORIAN HERMITAGE.
UNDERSTOOD. I'LL RETURN MAEYAMA TO YOUR HOME.
MR. CHIDA, PLEASE ARRANGE THE MATCHMAKING.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY...
MR. YAMAOKA, MS. KURITA...
CONGRATULATIONS, MR. MAEYAMA!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
22
TO ALL OUR READERS, HAVE A HAPPY NEW YEAR —

第5話

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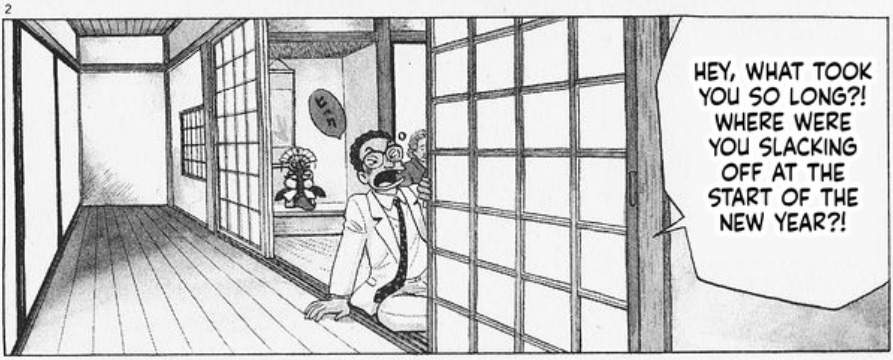
NEW YEAR'S DAY — KAMAKURA

COME ON IN.
HEY, HAPPY NEW YEAR.

HAPPY NEW YEAR.
HAPPY NEW YEAR.

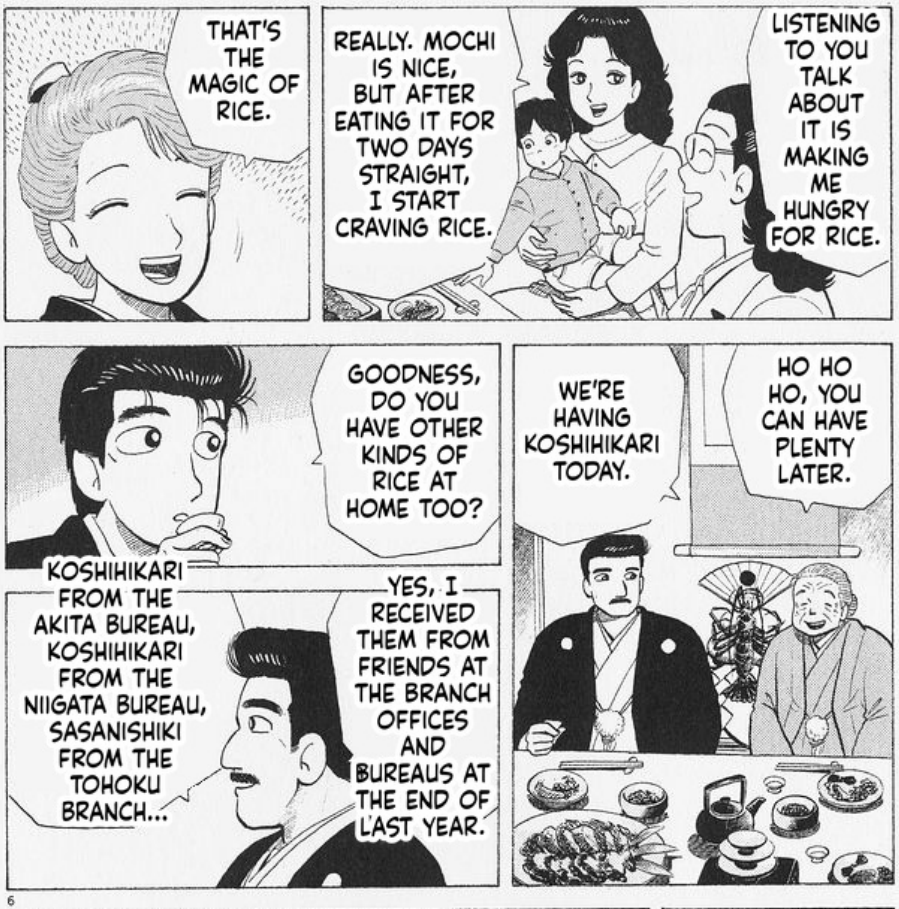
2


HEY, WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG?! WHERE WERE YOU SLACKING OFF AT THE START OF THE NEW YEAR?!

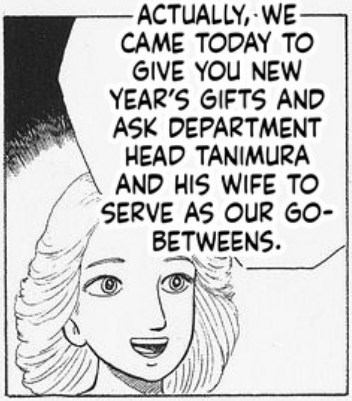
OH, EVERYONE'S HERE.
HAPPY NEW YEAR.
HAPPY NEW YEAR.
IT'S NEW YEAR'S, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE. HONESTLY! DRINK UP.
たはは
WHAT'S THIS, MR. YAMAOKA? YOU STILL HAVEN'T HAD ANY SACRED SAKE?
YUICHI JUST TOASTED WITH MILK.
YUICHI TOO.
3
OH, SHUICHI, YOU'RE TAKING THE UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE EXAMS NEXT YEAR? THAT'LL BE TOUGH.
FUH-HO-HO-HO!

UGH, HOW ANNOYING. SUCKING UP TO THE BOSS AND MAKING SNIDE REMARKS AT THE STAFF RIGHT AT THE START OF THE NEW YEAR...
HE'S DIFFERENT FROM THAT UNDERACHIEVER YAMAOKA.
DON'T WORRY -SHUICHI TAKES AFTER DEPARTMENT HEAD TANIMURA AND IS A GENIUS.
YES.
SO WHAT?
BUT I'M UNDERAGE.
WITHOUT THE PLEASURE OF BULLYING THEIR SUBORDINATES, WOULD SALARIED WORKERS WORK SO HARD TO FLATTER THEIR BOSSES AND GET AHEAD?
COME ON, HAVE A DRINK.
SHUICHI, YOU MUSTN'T GROW UP TO BE THIS KIND OF UNPLEASANT PERSON.
4
YES, I'LL HAVE SOME FOOD.
WHAT NONSENSE ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
SHUICHI, DON'T TAKE THIS SORT OF THING SERIOUSLY.
IF YOU DON'T START DRINKING WHEN YOU'RE YOUNG, YOU'LL NEVER BECOME A PROPER DRINKER!

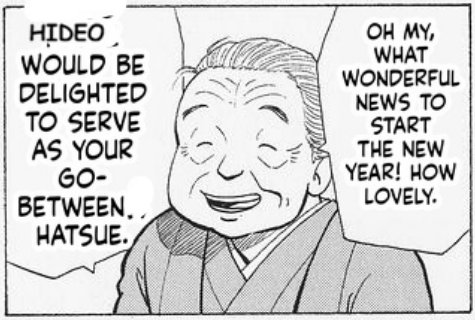
HEY, HEY, GO EASY ON HIM.
I WONDER WHAT KIND OF EDUCATION THE DEPARTMENT MANAGER IS GIVING HIS ELDEST SON.
PATHETIC! WITH SO MANY DISHES PERFECT FOR ACCOMPANYING SAKE, HE STILL CHOOSES TO EAT RICE.
DISHES FANCY ENOUGH TO GO WITH SAKE ARE ALSO PERFECT AS SIDE DISHES FOR RICE.
GOOD FOR HIM! THAT'S WHAT MAKES HIM JAPANESE!
EVEN THOUGH EVERYONE EATS BREAD IN THE MORNING, ONLY BIG BROTHER EATS RICE.
BIG BROTHER JUST LIKES RICE.
5
WHAT? SASANISHIKI IS BETTER.
IF YOU COOK AND SERVE HIM KOSHIHIKARI RICE FROM SOMEWHERE ELSE, HE SAYS HE WANTS THE RICE TO BE KOSHIHIKARI.
BUT HE'S GIVING US TROUBLE BY BEING SO DEMANDING.
THEY SAY HITOMEBORE IS DELICIOUS TOO.
AKITA KOMACHI IS DELICIOUS TOO.


THAT'S THE MAGIC OF RICE.
REALLY. MOCHI IS NICE, BUT AFTER EATING IT FOR TWO DAYS STRAIGHT, I START CRAVING RICE.
LISTENING TO YOU TALK ABOUT IT IS MAKING ME HUNGRY FOR RICE.
GOODNESS, DO YOU HAVE OTHER KINDS OF RICE AT HOME TOO?
KOSHIHIKARI FROM THE AKITA BUREAU, KOSHIHIKARI FROM THE NIIGATA BUREAU, SASANISHIKI FROM THE TOHOKU BRANCH...
YES, I RECEIVED THEM FROM FRIENDS AT THE BRANCH OFFICES AND BUREAUS AT THE END OF LAST YEAR.
WE'RE HAVING KOSHIHIKARI TODAY.
HO HO HO, YOU CAN HAVE PLENTY LATER.
6
SOUNDS GOOD.
IF YOU HAVE SO MANY DELICIOUS VARIETIES OF RICE, I'D LOVE TO COMPARE THEM.

HAPPY NEW YEAR.
HAPPY NEW YEAR.
WE HAVE SOME GUESTS!
THIS IS ANNE'S FIRST JAPANESE NEW YEAR.
NO. I SPENT TWO YEARS IN JAPAN WHEN I WAS IN COLLEGE.
MISAWA JUST GOT BACK FROM NEW YORK.
HAPPY NEW YEAR! THIS IS MISAWA FROM THE FOREIGN NEWS DEPARTMENT AND HIS FIANCÉE, ANNE FOSTER.
NICE TO MEET YOU!
7
I LOVE SAKE, TOO.
NOW, NOW, IN JAPAN, LADIES DON'T ASK FOR MORE DRINKS.
SHE'LL EAT ANYTHING.
DON'T TREAT HER LIKE A FOREIGNER.
NO WONDER YOUR JAPANESE IS SO GOOD.


ACTUALLY, WE CAME TODAY TO GIVE YOU NEW YEAR'S GIFTS AND ASK DEPARTMENT HEAD TANIMURA AND HIS WIFE TO SERVE AS OUR GO-BETWEENS.

YOU ONLY CLAIM TO BE TREATED AS A FOREIGNER WHEN IT'S CONVENIENT FOR YOU. THAT'S NOT FAIR.
NO, IT'S FINE. I'M A FOREIGNER, AFTER ALL.

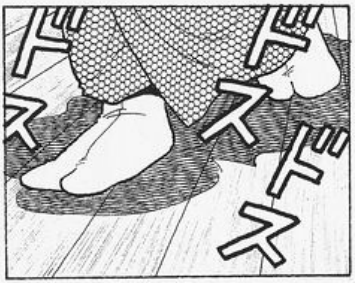

HIDEO WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO SERVE AS YOUR GO-BETWEEN. HATSUE.
OH MY, WHAT WONDERFUL NEWS TO START THE NEW YEAR! HOW LOVELY.

WE'RE PLANNING TO GET MARRIED THIS YEAR, SO WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU, SENPAI.

8

HEY! CONGRATULATIONS!

YES, OF COURSE!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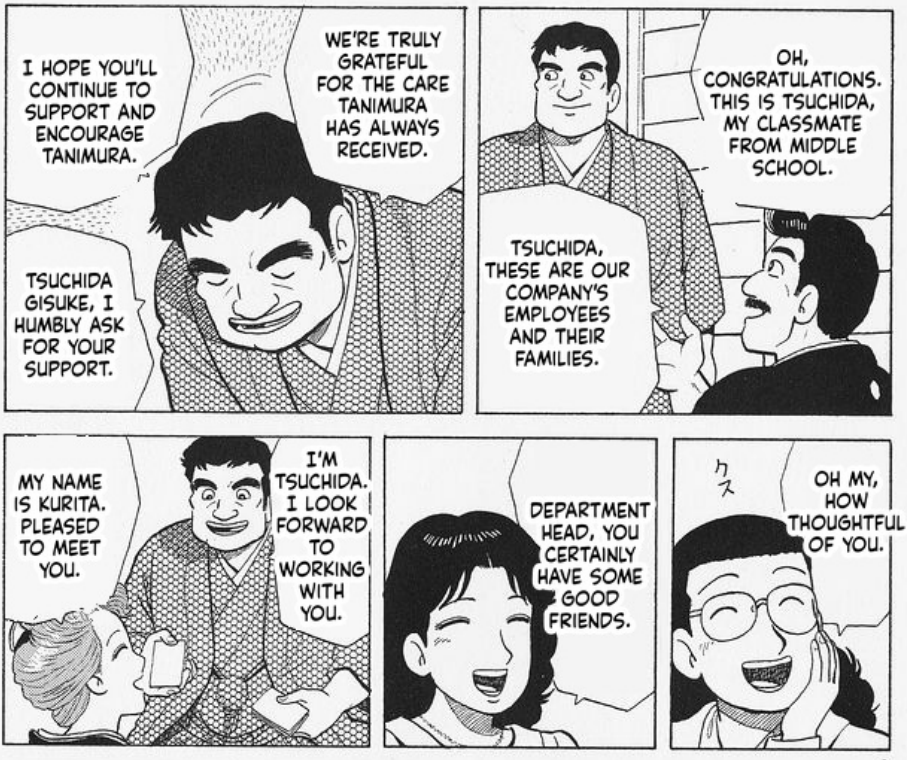
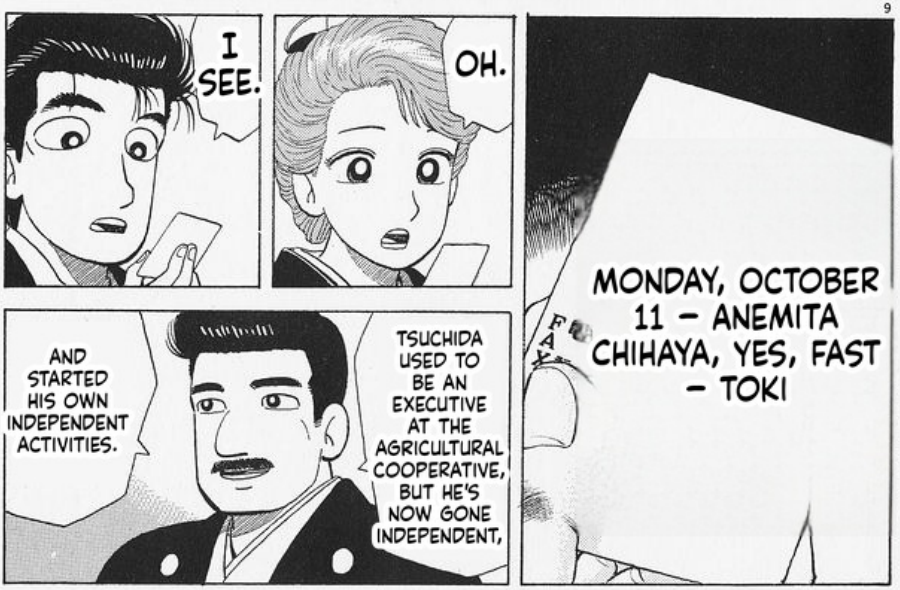

I HOPE YOU'LL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE TANIMURA.
WE'RE TRULY GRATEFUL FOR THE CARE TANIMURA HAS ALWAYS RECEIVED.
TSUCHIDA GISUKE, I HUMBLY ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT.
OH, CONGRATULATIONS. THIS IS TSUCHIDA, MY CLASSMATE FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL.
TSUCHIDA, THESE ARE OUR COMPANY'S EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES.
MY NAME IS KURITA. PLEASED TO MEET YOU.
I'M TSUCHIDA. I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU.
DEPARTMENT HEAD, YOU CERTAINLY HAVE SOME GOOD FRIENDS.
カス
OH MY, HOW THOUGHTFUL OF YOU.

9


I SEE.
OH.
AND STARTED HIS OWN INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES.
TSUCHIDA USED TO BE AN EXECUTIVE AT THE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE, BUT HE'S NOW GONE INDEPENDENT,
FAX
MONDAY, OCTOBER 11 – ANEMITA CHIHAYA, YES, FAST – TOKI

IF CHEAP RICE FLOODS IN, JAPAN'S RICE FARMERS WILL BE WIPED OUT.
THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT HAS BUCKLED UNDER PRESSURE FROM THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND IS ABOUT TO LIBERALIZE RICE IMPORTS.

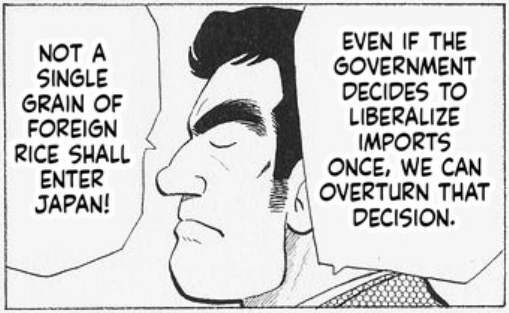
BUT ISN'T IT ALREADY TOO LATE?

THEY SAY THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY DECIDED INTERNALLY TO LIBERALIZE IMPORTS.

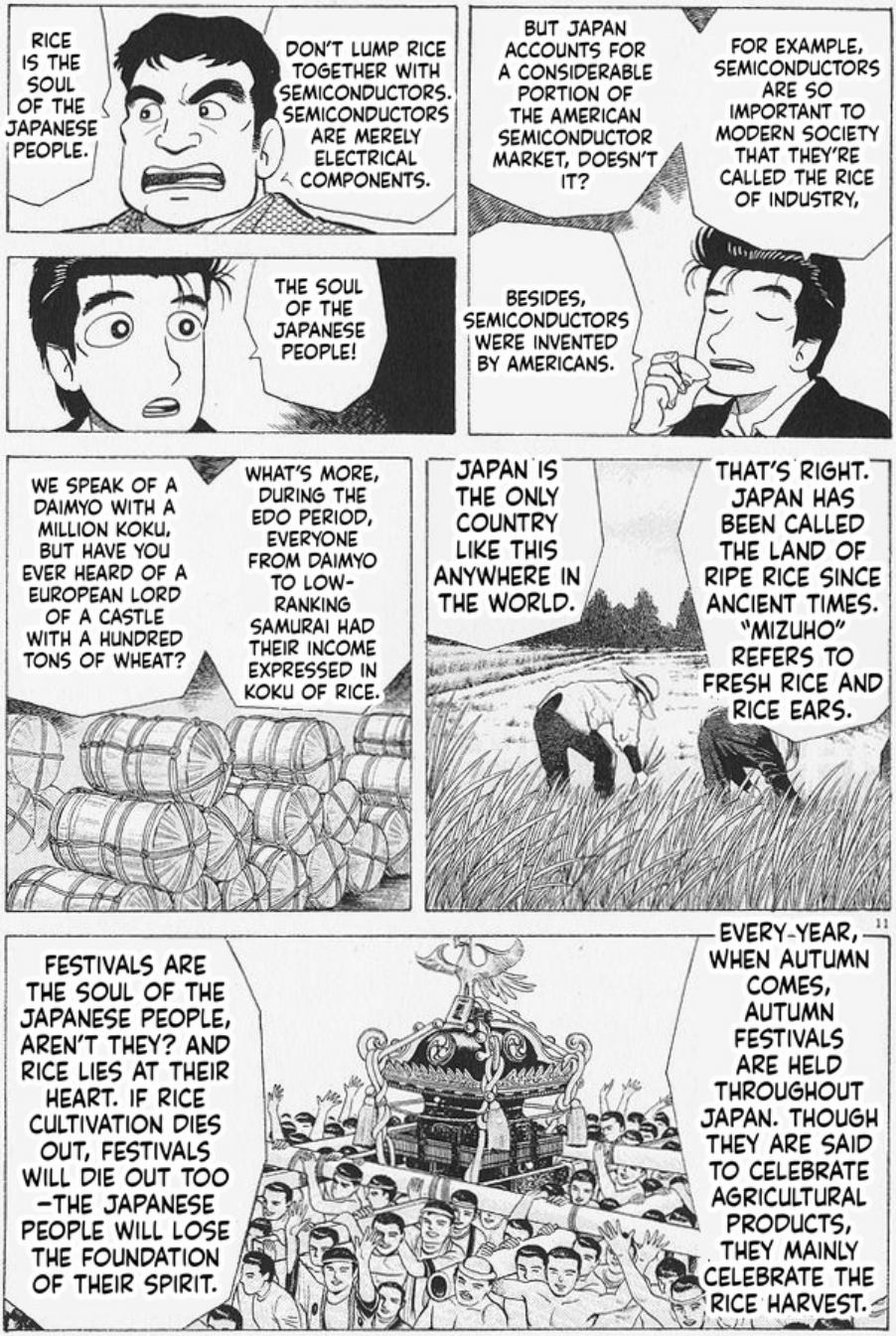
WE MUST STOP THE LIBERALIZATION OF RICE IMPORTS BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY. PLEASE LEND US YOUR SUPPORT.
RICE FARMING IS THE FOUNDATION OF JAPANESE AGRICULTURE; IF RICE FARMING PERISHES, SO WILL JAPANESE AGRICULTURE.

10

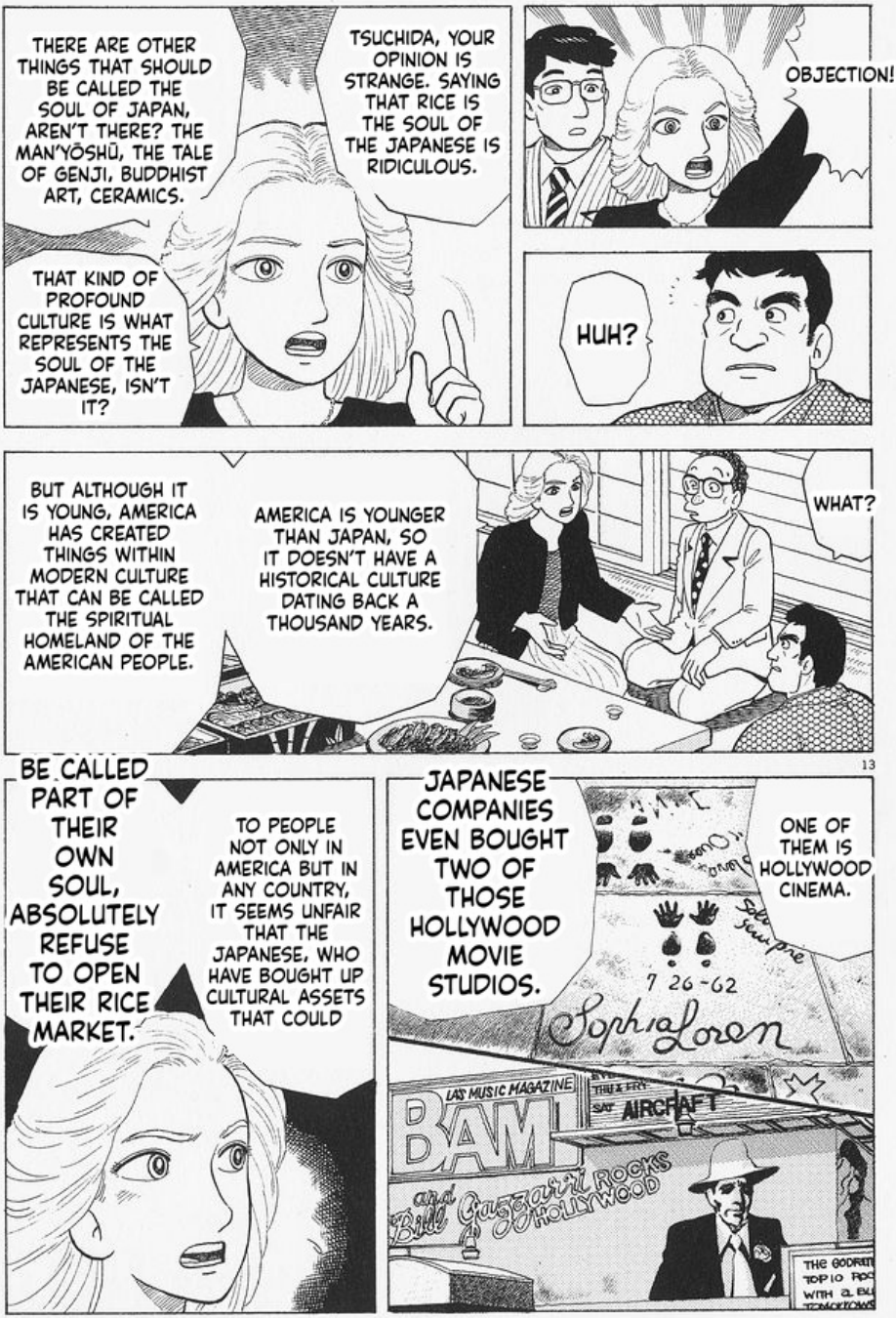
BUT DOESN'T THAT WAY OF THINKING FAIL TO HOLD UP IN TODAY'S WORLD?
WHAT?

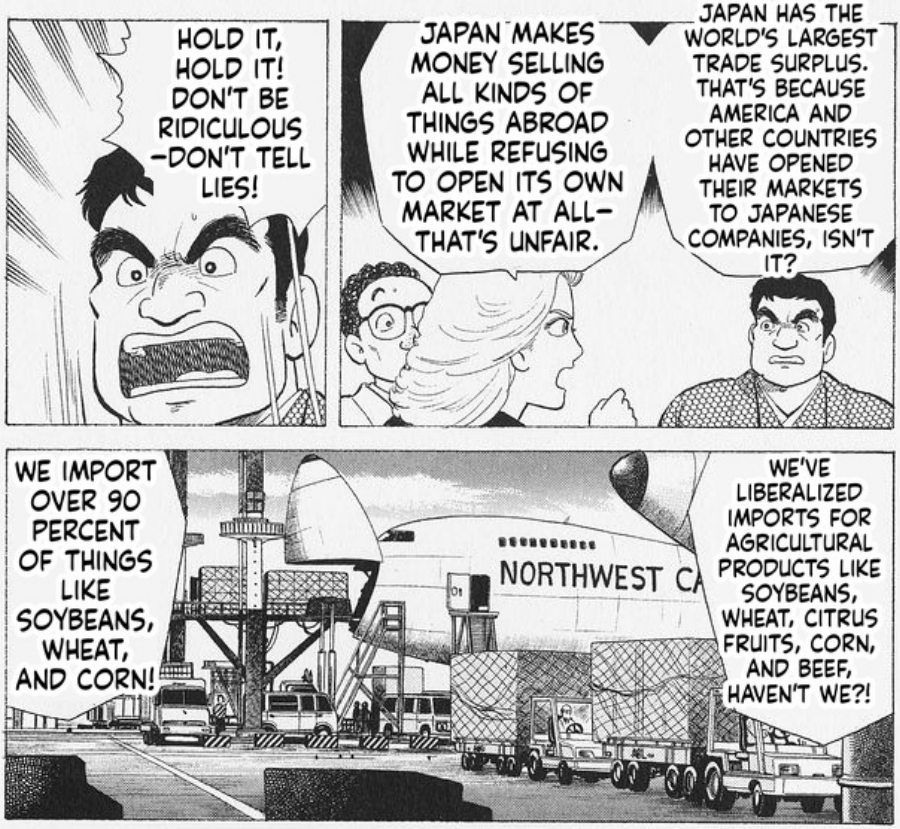

NOT A SINGLE GRAIN OF FOREIGN RICE SHALL ENTER JAPAN!
EVEN IF THE GOVERNMENT DECIDES TO LIBERALIZE IMPORTS ONCE, WE CAN OVERTURN THAT DECISION.

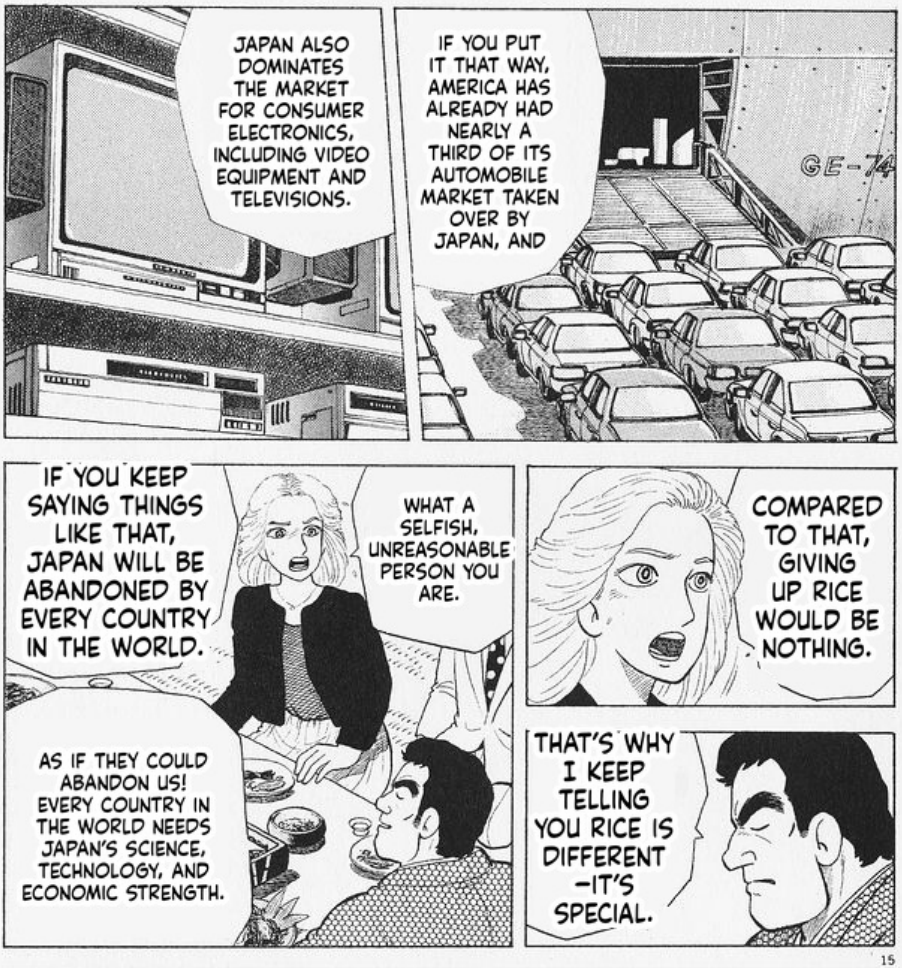
WELL, YOU CERTAINLY ARE ADAMANT...

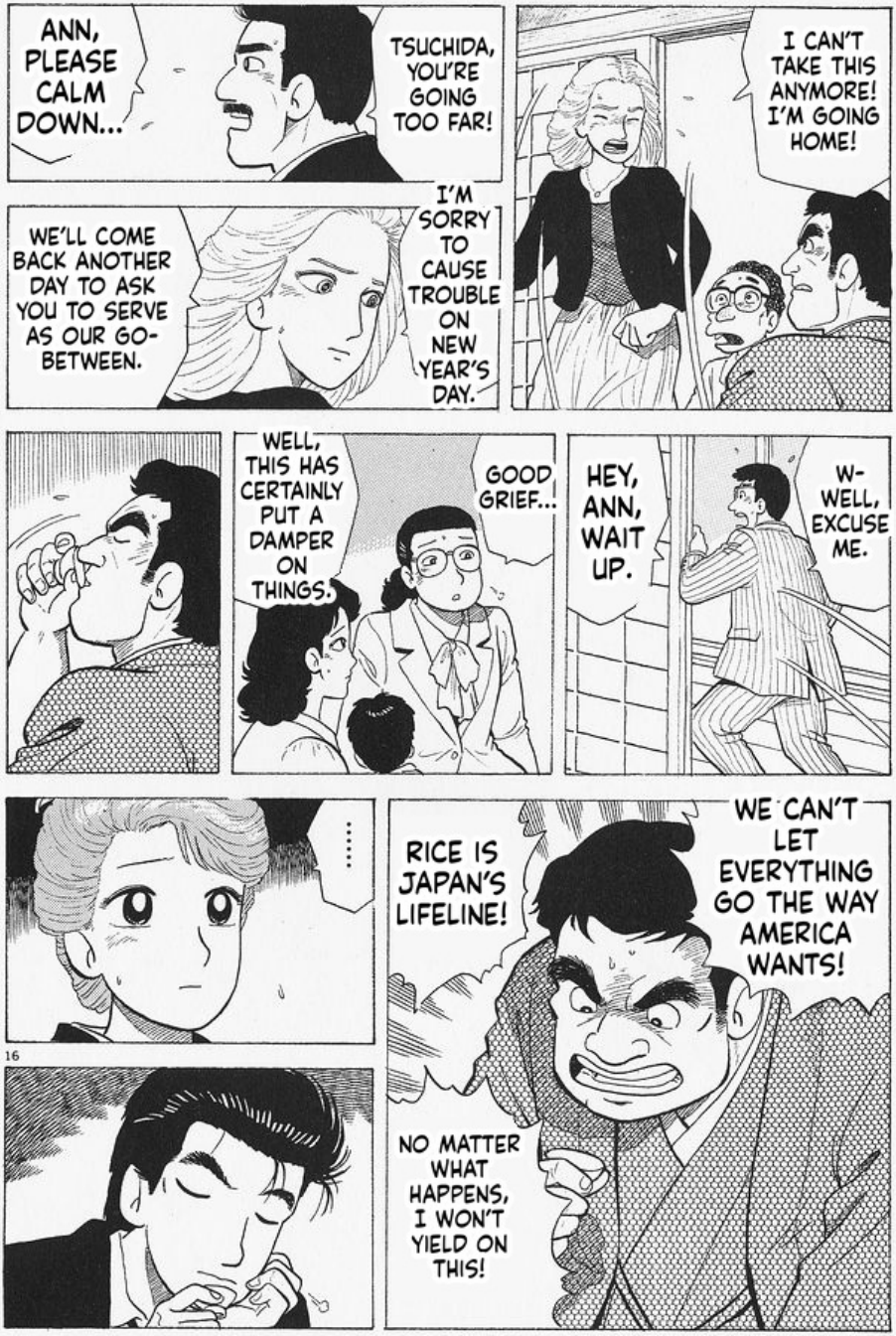

RICE IS THE SOUL OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE.
DON'T LUMP RICE TOGETHER WITH SEMICONDUCTORS. SEMICONDUCTORS ARE MERELY ELECTRICAL COMPONENTS.
THE SOUL OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE!
BUT JAPAN ACCOUNTS FOR A CONSIDERABLE PORTION OF THE AMERICAN SEMICONDUCTOR MARKET, DOESN'T IT?
FOR EXAMPLE, SEMICONDUCTORS ARE SO IMPORTANT TO MODERN SOCIETY THAT THEY'RE CALLED THE RICE OF INDUSTRY,
BESIDES, SEMICONDUCTORS WERE INVENTED BY AMERICANS.
WE SPEAK OF A DAIMYO WITH A MILLION KOKU, BUT HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF A EUROPEAN LORD OF A CASTLE WITH A HUNDRED TONS OF WHEAT?
WHAT'S MORE, DURING THE EDO PERIOD, EVERYONE FROM DAIMYO TO LOW-RANKING SAMURAI HAD THEIR INCOME EXPRESSED IN KOKU OF RICE.
JAPAN IS THE ONLY COUNTRY LIKE THIS ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.
THAT'S RIGHT. JAPAN HAS BEEN CALLED THE LAND OF RIPE RICE SINCE ANCIENT TIMES. "MIZUHO" REFERS TO FRESH RICE AND RICE EARS.
FESTIVALS ARE THE SOUL OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE, AREN'T THEY? AND RICE LIES AT THEIR HEART. IF RICE CULTIVATION DIES OUT, FESTIVALS WILL DIE OUT TOO —THE JAPANESE PEOPLE WILL LOSE THE FOUNDATION OF THEIR SPIRIT.
11
EVERY-YEAR, WHEN AUTUMN COMES, AUTUMN FESTIVALS ARE HELD THROUGHOUT JAPAN. THOUGH THEY ARE SAID TO CELEBRATE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, THEY MAINLY CELEBRATE THE RICE HARVEST.

THAT'S HOW SPECIAL RICE IS TO THE JAPANESE.
IN JAPAN, RICE IS CALLED OUR STAPLE FOOD. DO EUROPEANS CALL BREAD THEIR STAPLE FOOD? THEY DON'T, DO THEY?
EVEN THE NEW YEAR'S SHIMENAWA DECORATIONS ARE MADE FROM RICE STRAW.
THEY JUST KEEP COMING ONE AFTER ANOTHER, DON'T THEY?
THUS, RICE IS THE SOUL OF THE NATION TO THE JAPANESE— UNDERSTOOD?
WHEN A SICK PERSON'S CONDITION GREW SERIOUS, THEY WOULD PUT RICE IN A BAMBOO TUBE, SHAKE IT BY THE PATIENT'S EAR, AND LET THEM HEAR THE SOUND OF THE RICE. HEARING THE SOUND OF RICE WOULD GIVE THEM STRENGTH.
THERE'S MORE. JAPANESE WOMEN HAVE NAMES LIKE YONE AND YONEKO, MEANING RICE. THERE ARE COUNTLESS SURNAMES CONTAINING THE CHARACTER FOR RICE PLANT. THEY EVEN SAY THAT IN THE OLD DAYS,
ヘえ！
12
IT'S NOT THE JAPANESE PEOPLE'S FAULT IF THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND; IT'S THE FOREIGNERS' FAULT FOR FAILING TO UNDERSTAND.
EVEN SO, I DOUBT PEOPLE OTHER THAN THE JAPANESE WOULD UNDERSTAND YOUR ARGUMENT.
GOODNESS, YOU CERTAINLY MAKE A CONVINCING CASE.

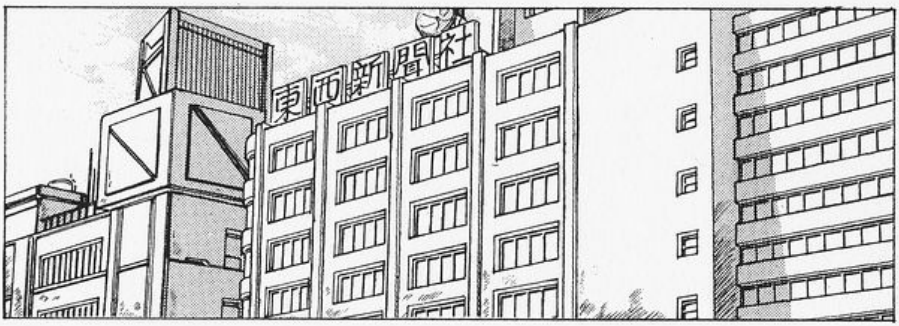

OBJECTION!
HUH?
TSUCHIDA, YOUR OPINION IS STRANGE. SAYING THAT RICE IS THE SOUL OF THE JAPANESE IS RIDICULOUS.
THERE ARE OTHER THINGS THAT SHOULD BE CALLED THE SOUL OF JAPAN, AREN'T THERE? THE MAN'YŌSHŪ, THE TALE OF GENJI, BUDDHIST ART, CERAMICS.
THAT KIND OF PROFOUND CULTURE IS WHAT REPRESENTS THE SOUL OF THE JAPANESE, ISN'T IT?
WHAT?
AMERICA IS YOUNGER THAN JAPAN, SO IT DOESN'T HAVE A HISTORICAL CULTURE DATING BACK A THOUSAND YEARS.
BUT ALTHOUGH IT IS YOUNG, AMERICA HAS CREATED THINGS WITHIN MODERN CULTURE THAT CAN BE CALLED THE SPIRITUAL HOMELAND OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.
13
ONE OF THEM IS HOLLYWOOD CINEMA.
JAPANESE COMPANIES EVEN BOUGHT TWO OF THOSE HOLLYWOOD MOVIE STUDIOS.
7 26-62
Sophia Loren
LA'S MUSIC MAGAZINE
BAM
AIRCRAFT
and Bill Gazzarri ROCKS HOLLYWOOD
TO PEOPLE NOT ONLY IN AMERICA BUT IN ANY COUNTRY, IT SEEMS UNFAIR THAT THE JAPANESE, WHO HAVE BOUGHT UP CULTURAL ASSETS THAT COULD
BE CALLED PART OF THEIR OWN SOUL, ABSOLUTELY REFUSE TO OPEN THEIR RICE MARKET.


HOLD IT, HOLD IT! DON'T BE RIDICULOUS —DON'T TELL LIES!
JAPAN MAKES MONEY SELLING ALL KINDS OF THINGS ABROAD WHILE REFUSING TO OPEN ITS OWN MARKET AT ALL— THAT'S UNFAIR.
JAPAN HAS THE WORLD'S LARGEST TRADE SURPLUS. THAT'S BECAUSE AMERICA AND OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE OPENED THEIR MARKETS TO JAPANESE COMPANIES, ISN'T IT?
WE IMPORT OVER 90 PERCENT OF THINGS LIKE SOYBEANS, WHEAT, AND CORN!
NORTHWEST CA
WE'VE LIBERALIZED IMPORTS FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS LIKE SOYBEANS, WHEAT, CITRUS FRUITS, CORN, AND BEEF, HAVEN'T WE?!
OH... BUT THAT'S...
AND WE BUY THE MOST FROM AMERICA, TOO!
14
THAT'S RIGHT. AFTER IMPORTING THIS MUCH, IT REALLY GETS UNDER MY SKIN WHEN THEY CALL US UNFAIR.


JAPAN ALSO DOMINATES THE MARKET FOR CONSUMER ELECTRONICS, INCLUDING VIDEO EQUIPMENT AND TELEVISIONS.
IF YOU PUT IT THAT WAY, AMERICA HAS ALREADY HAD NEARLY A THIRD OF ITS AUTOMOBILE MARKET TAKEN OVER BY JAPAN, AND
GE-74
IF YOU KEEP SAYING THINGS LIKE THAT, JAPAN WILL BE ABANDONED BY EVERY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD.
WHAT A SELFISH, UNREASONABLE PERSON YOU ARE.
AS IF THEY COULD ABANDON US! EVERY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD NEEDS JAPAN'S SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND ECONOMIC STRENGTH.
COMPARED TO THAT, GIVING UP RICE WOULD BE NOTHING.
THAT'S WHY I KEEP TELLING YOU RICE IS DIFFERENT —IT'S SPECIAL.
15
AMERICA'S FUTURE DISAPPEARED A LONG TIME AGO!
IF ALL JAPANESE PEOPLE WERE LIKE THIS, JAPAN WOULD HAVE NO FUTURE!
MY! WHAT AN ARROGANT, CONCEITED ATTITUDE!


ANN, PLEASE CALM DOWN...
TSUCHIDA, YOU'RE GOING TOO FAR!
I CAN'T TAKE THIS ANYMORE! I'M GOING HOME!
I'M SORRY TO CAUSE TROUBLE ON NEW YEAR'S DAY.
WE'LL COME BACK ANOTHER DAY TO ASK YOU TO SERVE AS OUR GO-BETWEEN.
GOOD GRIEF...
WELL, THIS HAS CERTAINLY PUT A DAMPER ON THINGS.
W-WELL, EXCUSE ME.
HEY, ANN, WAIT UP.
.....
WE CAN'T LET EVERYTHING GO THE WAY AMERICA WANTS!
RICE IS JAPAN'S LIFELINE!
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, I WON'T YIELD ON THIS!

16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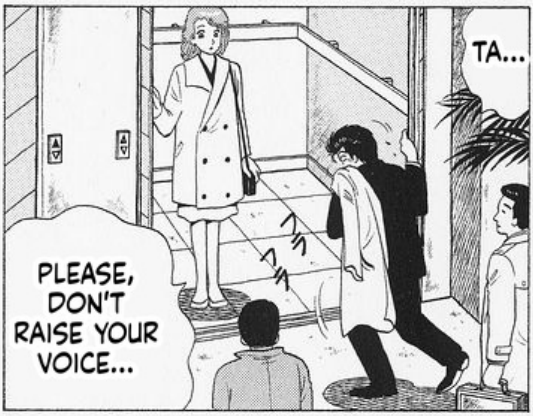
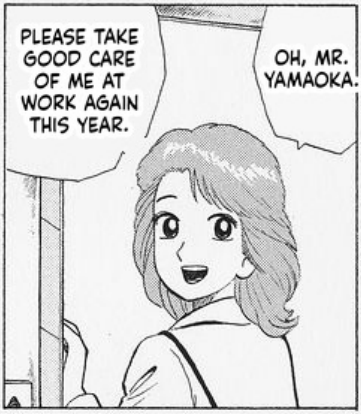

TA...
PLEASE, DON'T RAISE YOUR VOICE...


OH, MR. YAMAOKA.
PLEASE TAKE GOOD CARE OF ME AT WORK AGAIN THIS YEAR.

GO AHEAD AND DIE ON YOUR OWN!
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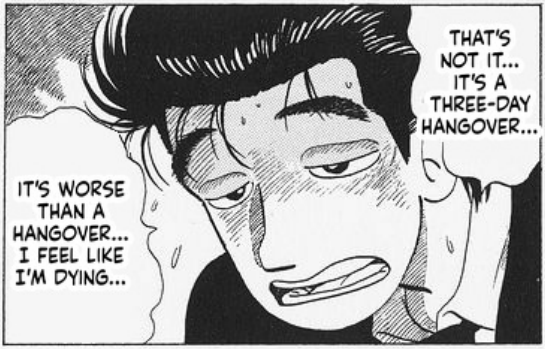
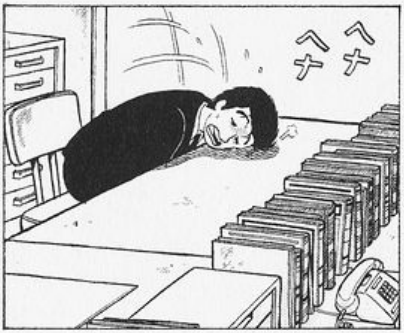
WELL, HOW DISGRACEFUL —A HANGOVER FIRST THING IN THE NEW YEAR.

17


THAT'S NOT IT... IT'S A THREE-DAY HANGOVER...
IT'S WORSE THAN A HANGOVER... I FEEL LIKE I'M DYING...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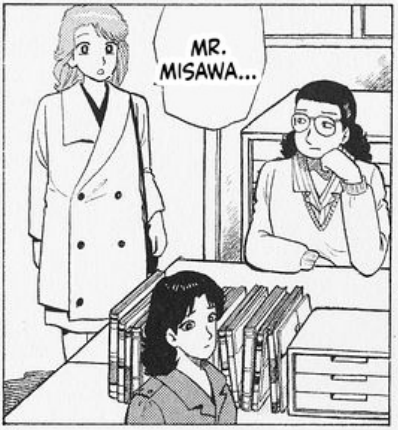
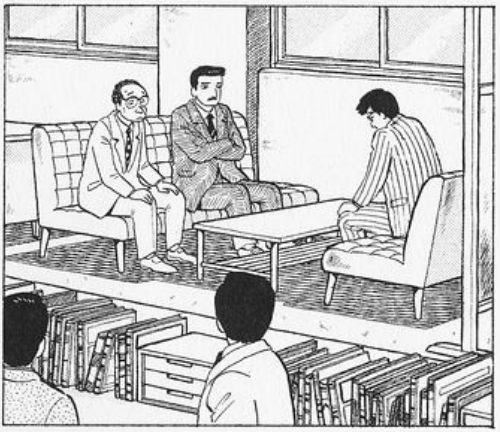
CONGRATULATIONS!


MR. MISAWA...



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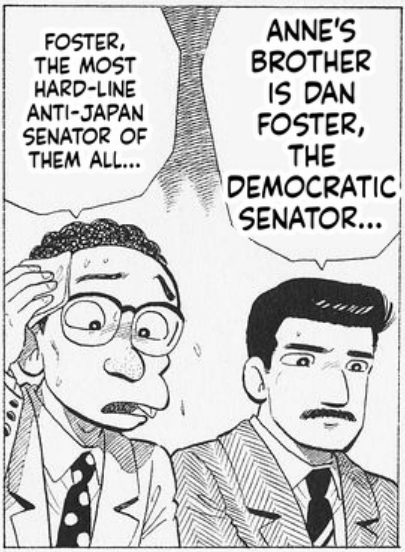
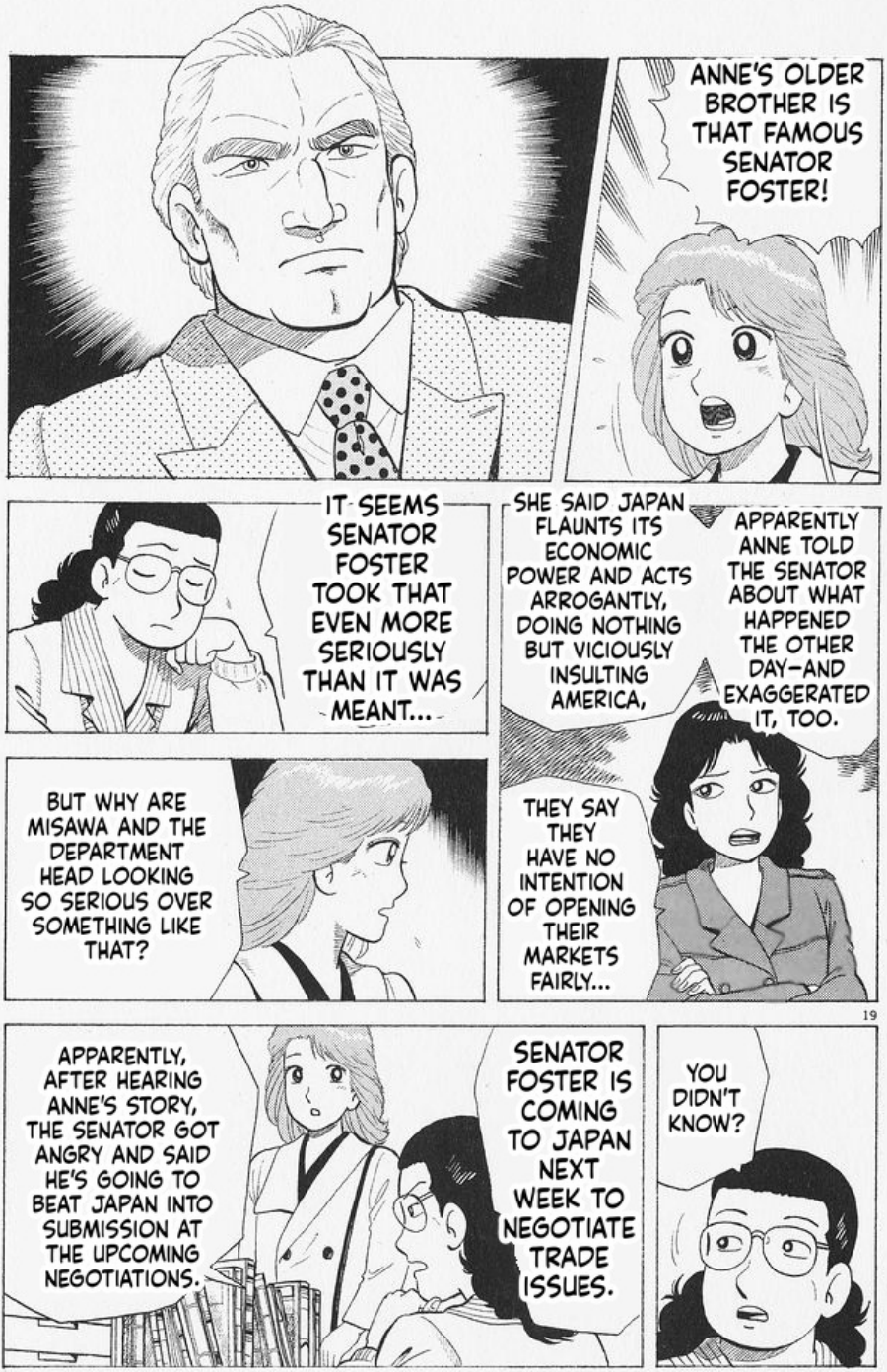

FOSTER, THE MOST HARD-LINE ANTI-JAPAN SENATOR OF THEM ALL...
ANNE'S BROTHER IS DAN FOSTER, THE DEMOCRATIC SENATOR...

DID THINGS GO SOUR BETWEEN YOU AND ANNE BECAUSE OF WHAT HAPPENED THE OTHER DAY?
THIS IS NO TIME FOR THAT.

THIS COULD BECOME A MAJOR PROBLEM.



109 *TL NOTE: JUST GETTING THIS OUT OF THE WAY, BUT U.S. SENATORS DON'T NEGOTIATE TRADE DEALS. THAT'S TOTALLY OUTSIDE THEIR PURVIEW. TRADE NEGOTIATIONS ARE HANDLED BY THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, NOT THE LEGISLATIVE.

GOOD HEAVENS, HOW EXTREME...!
HE ANNOUNCED THAT HE PLANS TO SUBMIT A BILL TO CONGRESS IMPOSING SPECIAL TARIFFS ON GOODS EXPORTED FROM JAPAN TO THE UNITED STATES...
TANIMURA! WHAT ON EARTH HAVE YOU DONE?
ダダダダ
20
HUH.
THAT'S NOT IT.
I JUST GOT A CALL FROM AN LDP EXECUTIVE!
I HEAR YOU DID SOMETHING TO ANGER SENATOR FOSTER!

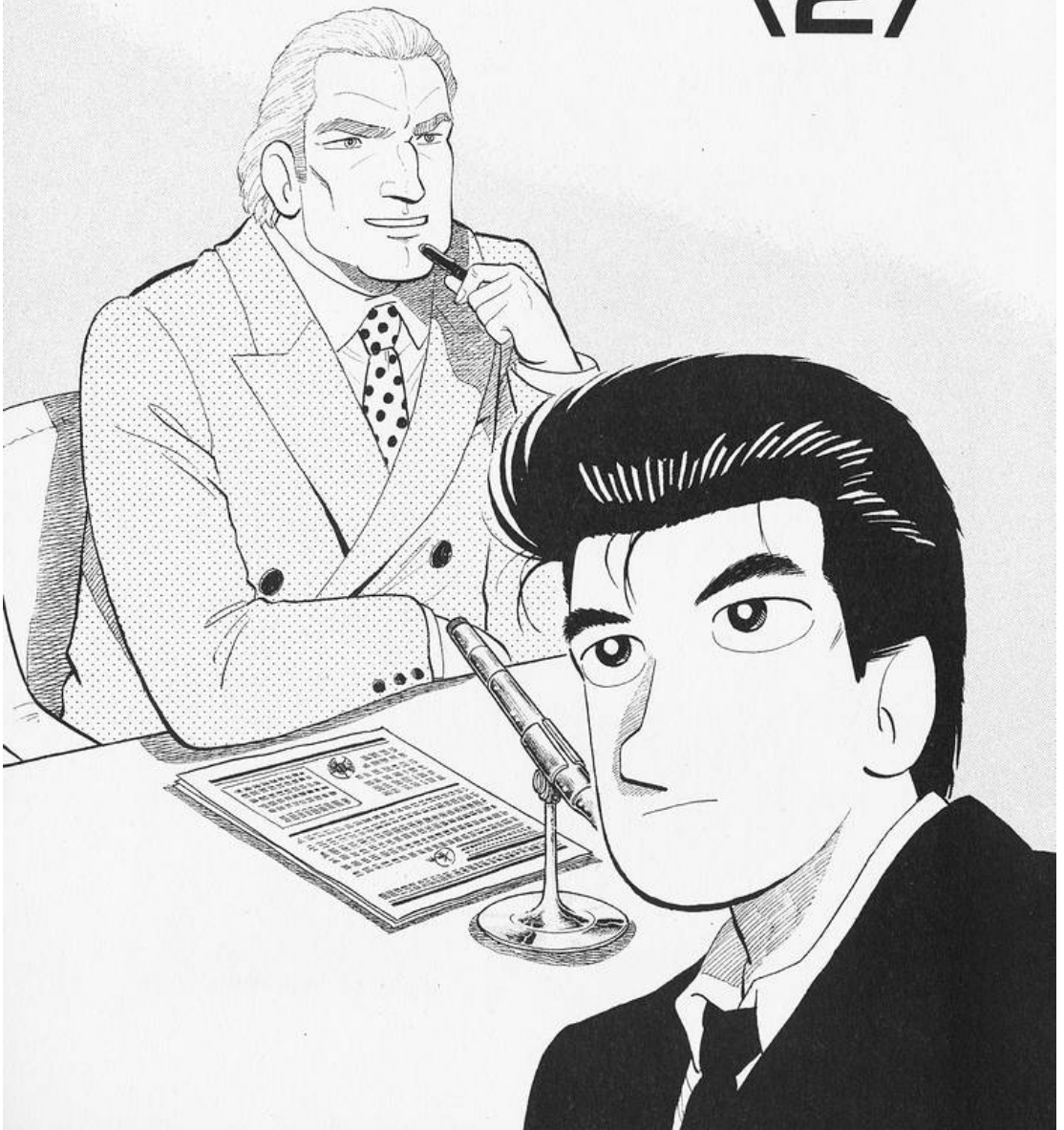
TANIMURA! YOU'RE FIRED, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY!
AT A TIME THIS CRITICAL, WE CANNOT POSSIBLY FACE THE PUBLIC KNOWING THAT ONE OF OUR EMPLOYEES HAS DONE SOMETHING TO DAMAGE JAPAN-U.S. RELATIONS!
SHUT UP!
HA...
NO EXCUSES. YOU WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE!
PRESIDENT OHARA, THAT'S NOT IT!
THIS ISN'T DIVISION CHIEF TANIMURA'S FAULT!

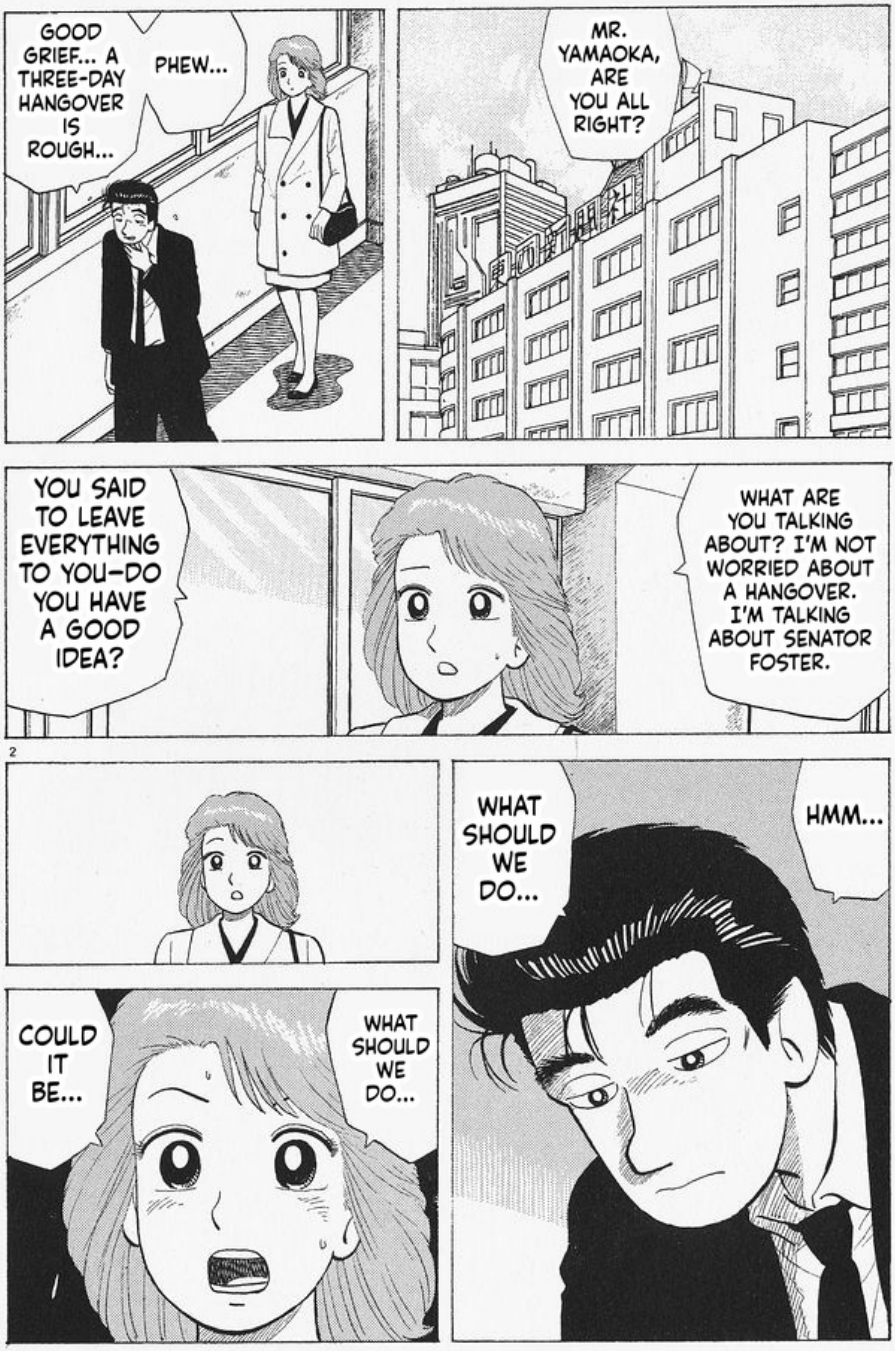
21

.....
DON'T DO ANYTHING STUPID!
MISAWA, WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!
THAT SHOULD MAKE UP FOR ALL THIS COMMOTION...
I'M BREAKING UP WITH ANN...

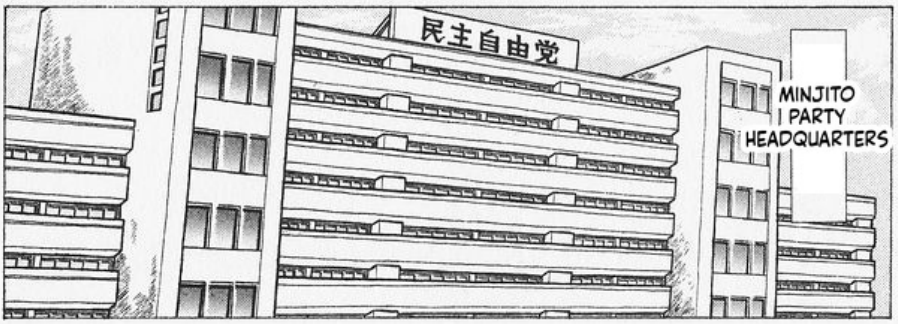
EVERYONE.....
EVERY.....
YES?
I'LL TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING.....
WHAT?
JUST LEAVE IT TO ME. LIKE ALWAYS.
22
パ
ヘ
ナ
MR. YAMAOKA.....

第5話
日米コメ戦争〈2〉




GOOD GRIEF... A THREE-DAY HANGOVER IS ROUGH...
PHEW...
MR. YAMAOKA, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YOU SAID TO LEAVE EVERYTHING TO YOU—DO YOU HAVE A GOOD IDEA?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT A HANGOVER. I'M TALKING ABOUT SENATOR FOSTER.
2
WHAT SHOULD WE DO...
HMM...
COULD IT BE...
WHAT SHOULD WE DO...

PUT YOURSELF IN MY SHOES. I'M SUFFERING FROM A THREE-DAY HANGOVER, AND WITH THE SENATOR BEING LIKE THAT, THEY'RE MAKING SUCH A RACKET ABOUT HOW THIS IS ALL DEPARTMENT HEAD TANIMURA'S RESPONSIBILITY. IT'S UNBEARABLE.
DON'T TELL ME YOU SAID, 'LEAVE IT TO ME,' WITHOUT HAVING ANY IDEA WHAT TO DO!
WHILE DEPARTMENT HEAD TANIMURA IS BEING DRIVEN INTO A CORNER!
ボカ
HOW AWFUL! WHAT KIND OF PERSON ARE YOU!
あたた。
MY! SO YOU'RE TRYING TO RUN AWAY FROM THE SCENE!
I THOUGHT IF I GOT SOME SLEEP SOMEWHERE, I'D FEEL A LOT BETTER.
3
CROQUETTES? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
HUH?
BEFORE I GO TO BED, I'M GOING TO BUY SOME CROQUETTES FIRST.
NO, WAIT —I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING.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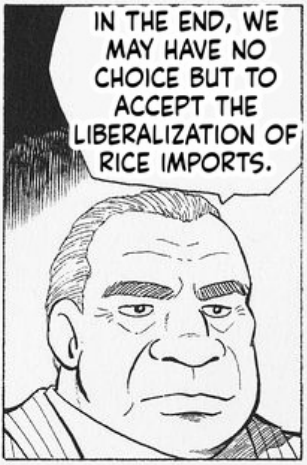
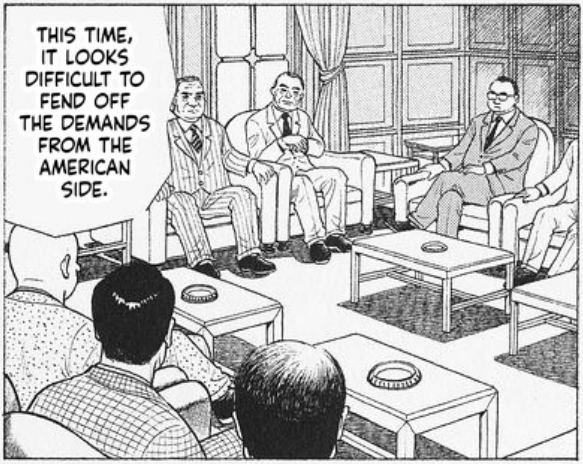
I PARTY
HEADQUARTERS


IN THE END, WE MAY HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO ACCEPT THE LIBERALIZATION OF RICE IMPORTS.


THIS TIME, IT LOOKS DIFFICULT TO FEND OFF THE DEMANDS FROM THE AMERICAN SIDE.

4

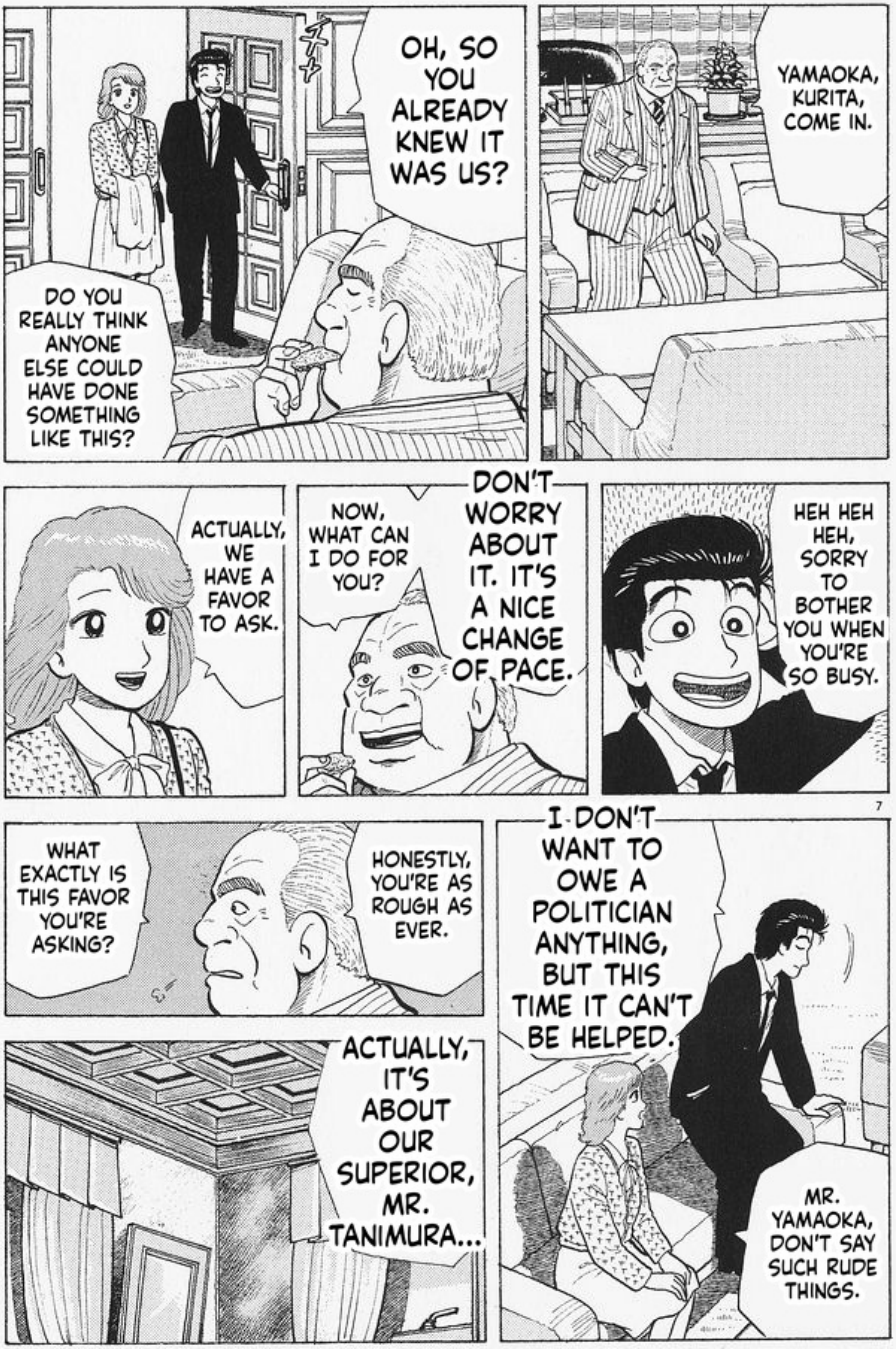
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, ARE YOU TELLING US TO GO DIE?!
NO, I DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING LIKE THAT...

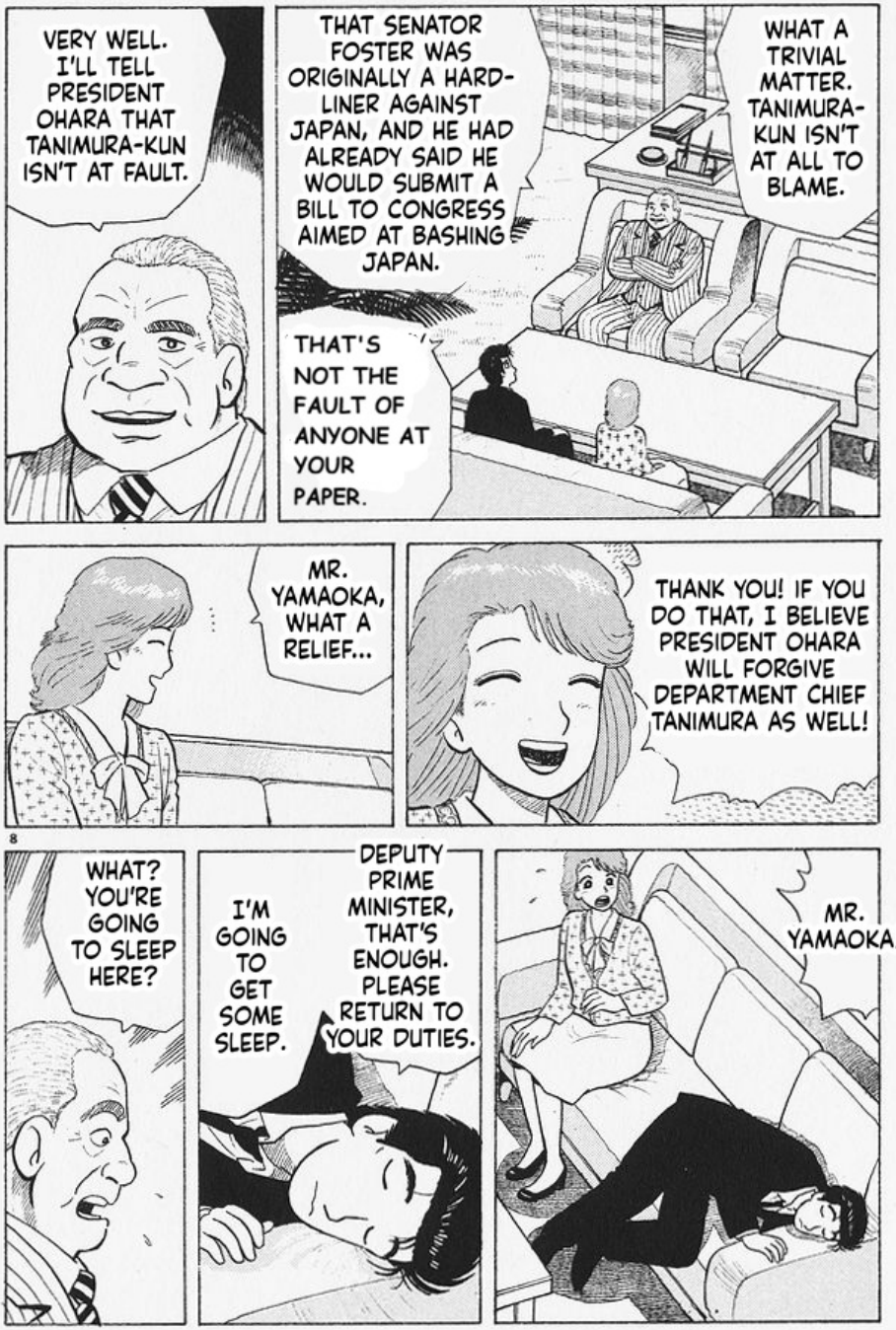
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS. I CAN'T GO TO MY CONSTITUENCY AND TELL THEM SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

IF I LET SLIP ANYTHING ABOUT LIBERALIZING RICE IMPORTS, THAT ALONE WOULD CERTAINLY COST ME THE NEXT ELECTION.
MOST OF THE PEOPLE IN MY CONSTITUENCY ARE FARMERS, YOU KNOW.

BUT OVER A SINGLE GRAIN OF RICE, OUR COUNTRY RISKS BECOMING ISOLATED FROM THE REST OF THE WORLD...
THEY'RE DETERMINED TO FORCE THEIR DEMANDS THROUGH NO MATTER WHAT!
AMERICA IS OUTRAGEOUS, ANYWAY!
NOW IS THE TIME TO STAND FIRM! WE HAVE TO GIVE AMERICA ONE HELL OF A BLOW!
THEN THEY TOLD ME THAT IF I DIDN'T DELIVER THIS TO YOU, YOU'D BE ANGRY WITH ME LATER...
I SAID THE SAME THING, BUT
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS, TALKING ABOUT A MEETING!
DON'T YOU REALIZE WHAT KIND OF SITUATION WE'RE IN RIGHT NOW?!
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, YOU HAVE A VISITOR...
5
WHAT?

YOU CAN'T MAKE THESE WITHOUT YEARS OF EXPERIENCE! RIGHT?
FRIED TO A CRISP AND ABSOLUTELY PERFECT! THIS IS THE WORK OF A MASTER!
AND THEY'RE FRESH FROM THE FRYER —STILL PIPING HOT!
OH! ISN'T THIS MY ABSOLUTE FAVORITE— THE BUTCHER SHOP'S POTATO CROQUETTES!
THAT FRAGRANT, CRISPY COATING WITH THE PIPING-HOT, FLUFFY POTATO INSIDE— AND I LOVE THAT IT'S NOTHING BUT POTATOES!
MUH HO HO HO! THIS IS IRRESISTIBLE!
UWOH HO HO HO.....
IF YOU GO AND ADD MEAT, YOU LOSE THIS PURE FLAVOR, YOU SEE—HO HO HO!
6
EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT.

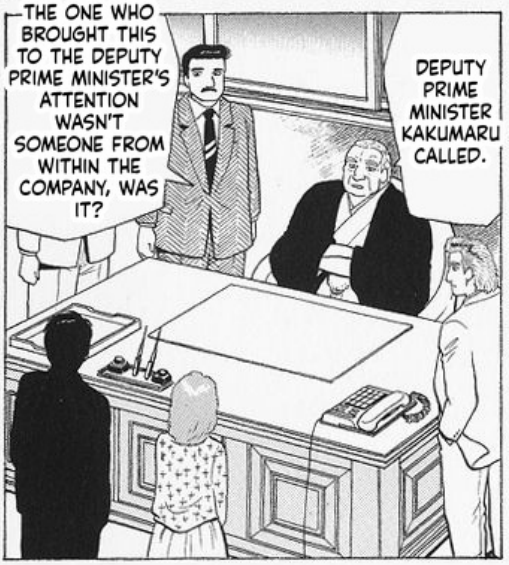

OH, SO YOU ALREADY KNEW IT WAS US?
DO YOU REALLY THINK ANYONE ELSE COULD HAVE DONE SOMETHING LIKE THIS?
YAMAOKA, KURITA, COME IN.
ACTUALLY, WE HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK.
NOW, WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. IT'S A NICE CHANGE OF PACE.
HEH HEH HEH, SORRY TO BOTHER YOU WHEN YOU'RE SO BUSY.
7
WHAT EXACTLY IS THIS FAVOR YOU'RE ASKING?
HONESTLY, YOU'RE AS ROUGH AS EVER.
I DON'T WANT TO OWE A POLITICIAN ANYTHING, BUT THIS TIME IT CAN'T BE HELPED.
ACTUALLY, IT'S ABOUT OUR SUPERIOR, MR. TANIMURA...
MR. YAMAOKA, DON'T SAY SUCH RUDE THINGS.


VERY WELL. I'LL TELL PRESIDENT OHARA THAT TANIMURA-KUN ISN'T AT FAULT.
THAT SENATOR FOSTER WAS ORIGINALLY A HARD-LINER AGAINST JAPAN, AND HE HAD ALREADY SAID HE WOULD SUBMIT A BILL TO CONGRESS AIMED AT BASHING JAPAN.
WHAT A TRIVIAL MATTER. TANIMURA-KUN ISN'T AT ALL TO BLAME.
THAT'S NOT THE FAULT OF ANYONE AT YOUR PAPER.
MR. YAMAOKA, WHAT A RELIEF...
THANK YOU! IF YOU DO THAT, I BELIEVE PRESIDENT OHARA WILL FORGIVE DEPARTMENT CHIEF TANIMURA AS WELL!
8
WHAT? YOU'RE GOING TO SLEEP HERE?
I'M GOING TO GET SOME SLEEP.
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, THAT'S ENOUGH. PLEASE RETURN TO YOUR DUTIES.
MR. YAMAOKA!

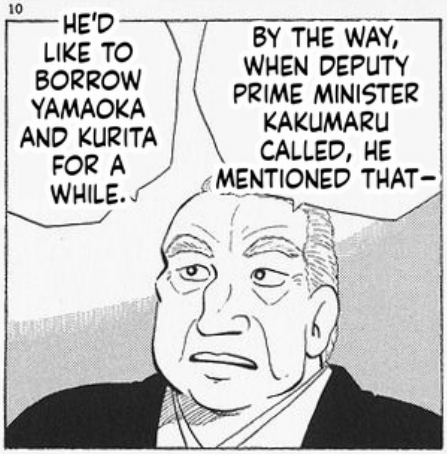
NO, MR. YAMAOKA!
LATELY, WHENEVER I SLEEP IN THE COMPANY LIBRARY, PEOPLE COMPLAIN ABOUT THE NOISE...
BESIDES, I DON'T USE THIS ROOM WHEN I GO TO WORK, SO WHAT'S THE HARM?
SLEEPING HERE RIGHT IN FRONT OF THIS CORNER, SNORING LIKE A FREIGHT TRAIN -YOU'VE GOT SOME NERVE.
フガー
A THREE-DAY HANGOVER!
I'M TRULY SORRY. IT'S JUST THAT... I HAD A THREE-DAY HANGOVER.
フガー
フガー
HA! THIS MAN COULD BE USEFUL!
9
HUH?

IT TURNS OUT THAT MR. FOSTER'S SISTER GETTING INTO A DISPUTE WITH TANIMURA'S FRIEND WASN'T THE MAIN CAUSE.
東西新聞社
SENATOR FOSTER INTENDS TO SUBMIT A BILL TO CONGRESS IMPOSING SANCTIONS ON JAPAN-

SURELY OUR COMPANY HAS NO SUCH IGNORANT PEOPLE.
ANYONE WHO TELLS A POLITICIAN SOMETHING IMPORTANT ABOUT THE COMPANY IS UNFIT TO CALL HIMSELF A NEWSPAPER REPORTER.


THE ONE WHO BROUGHT THIS TO THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER'S ATTENTION WASN'T SOMEONE FROM WITHIN THE COMPANY, WAS IT?
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER KAKUMARU CALLED.

10


HE'D LIKE TO BORROW YAMAOKA AND KURITA FOR A WHILE.
BY THE WAY, WHEN DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER KAKUMARU CALLED, HE MENTIONED THAT-

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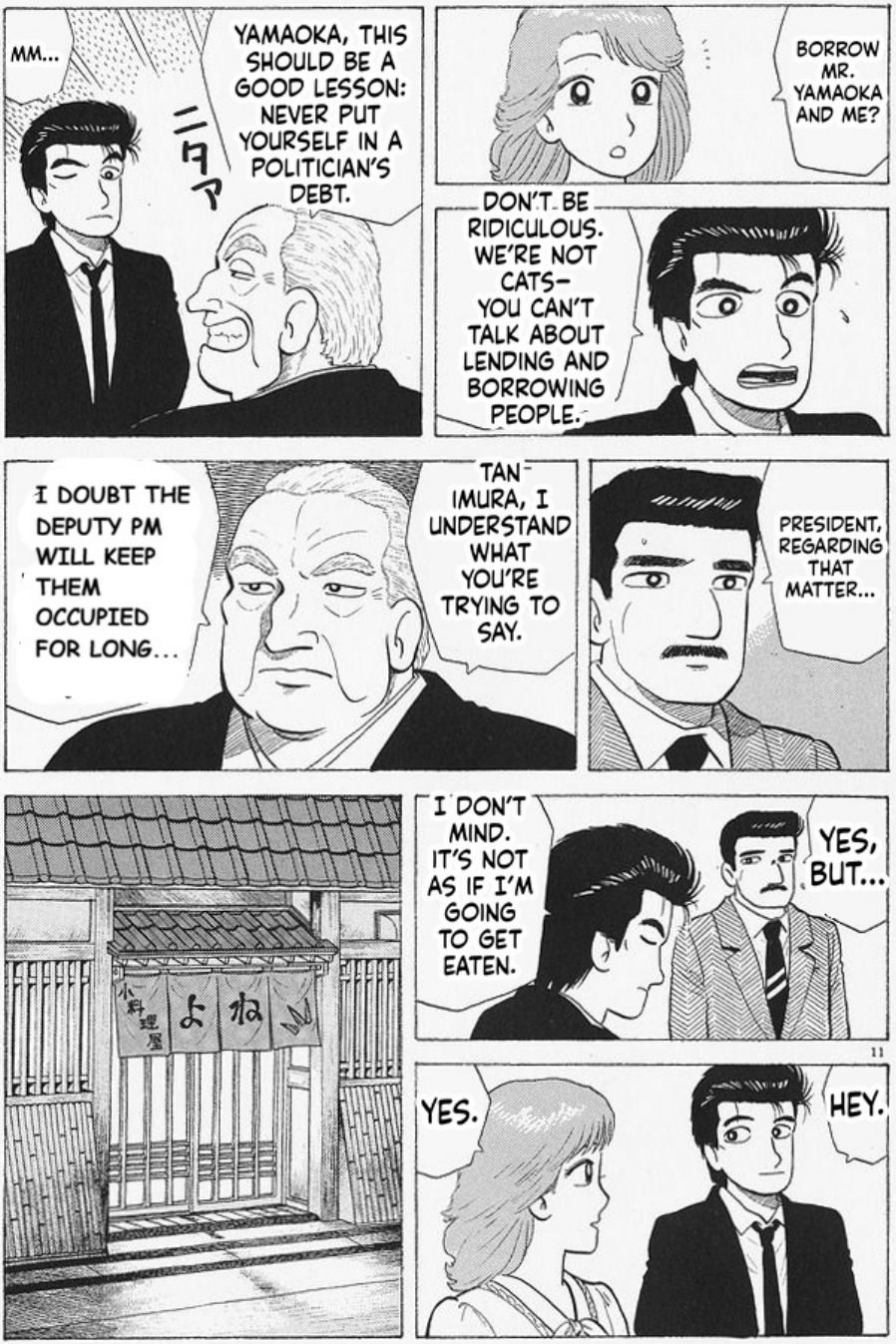

MM...
YAMAOKA, THIS SHOULD BE A GOOD LESSON: NEVER PUT YOURSELF IN A POLITICIAN'S DEBT.
ニヤア
BORROW MR. YAMAOKA AND ME?
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS. WE'RE NOT CATS— YOU CAN'T TALK ABOUT LENDING AND BORROWING PEOPLE.
I DOUBT THE DEPUTY PM WILL KEEP THEM OCCUPIED FOR LONG...
TAN-IMURA, I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY.
PRESIDENT, REGARDING THAT MATTER...
小料理屋
よね
I DON'T MIND. IT'S NOT AS IF I'M GOING TO GET EATEN.
YES, BUT...
11
YES.
HEY.

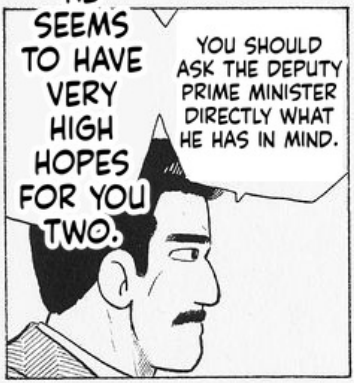
WHY?

KAKUMARU, THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, ASKED CHAIRMAN OHARA TO LEND HIM YOU TWO BECAUSE
HE WANTS YOU TO TACKLE THE ISSUE OF LIBERALIZING RICE IMPORTS.

US?!

WHAT ON EARTH COULD HE BE THINKING...?

BUT... WHAT COULD WE POSSIBLY DO?


HE SEEMS TO HAVE VERY HIGH HOPES FOR YOU TWO.
YOU SHOULD ASK THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DIRECTLY WHAT HE HAS IN MIND.

12

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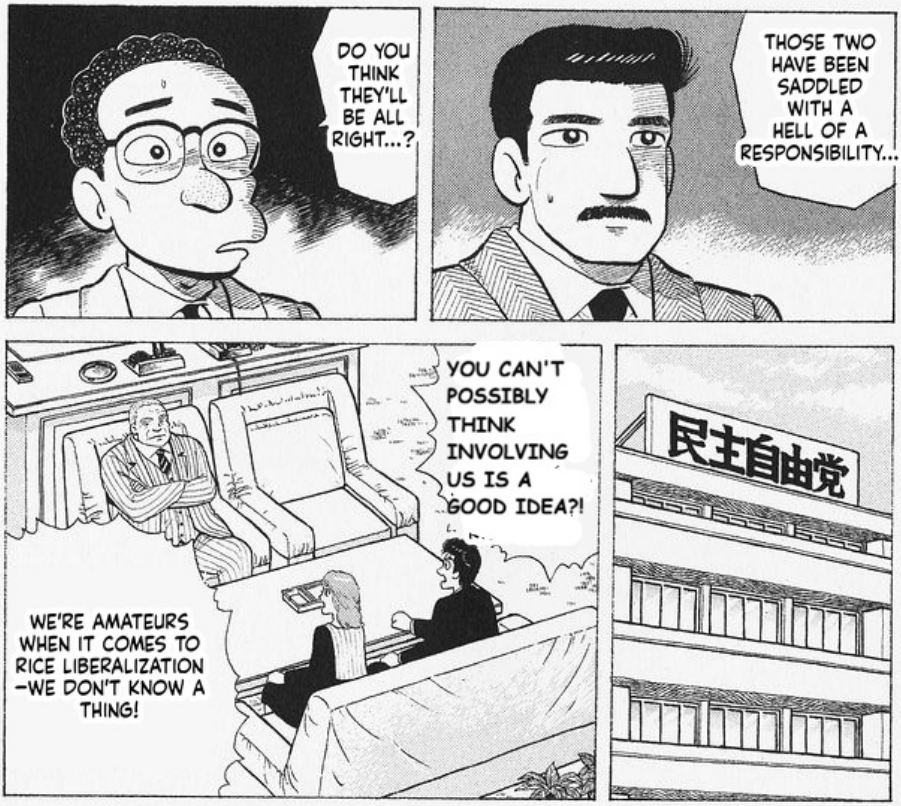
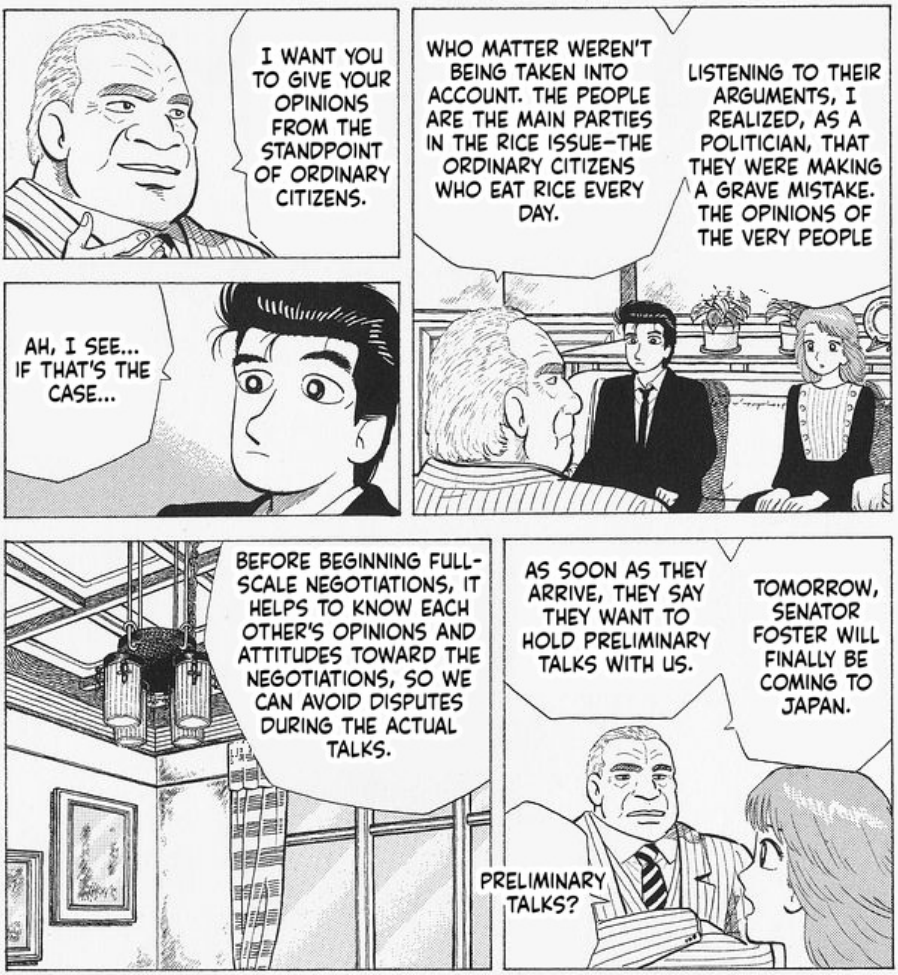

DO YOU THINK THEY'LL BE ALL RIGHT...?
THOSE TWO HAVE BEEN SADDLED WITH A HELL OF A RESPONSIBILITY...
YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY THINK INVOLVING US IS A GOOD IDEA?!
WE'RE AMATEURS WHEN IT COMES TO RICE LIBERALIZATION —WE DON'T KNOW A THING!
民主自由党
THE REASON WE CAN'T AGREE IS THAT EVERYONE INVOLVED IN THE DISCUSSIONS IS EITHER AN EXPERT OR SOMEONE WITH A VESTED INTEREST IN THE RICE IMPORT ISSUE.
WE'VE HELD EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE RICE IMPORT ISSUE, BOTH WITHIN THE MINJITO PARTY AND WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT. BUT NO MATTER WHAT, WE CAN'T REACH A CONSENSUS.
THAT'S PRECISELY WHY AMATEURS ARE USEFUL.
13
WHY?


I WANT YOU TO GIVE YOUR OPINIONS FROM THE STANDPOINT OF ORDINARY CITIZENS.
WHO MATTER WEREN'T BEING TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. THE PEOPLE ARE THE MAIN PARTIES IN THE RICE ISSUE—THE ORDINARY CITIZENS WHO EAT RICE EVERY DAY.
LISTENING TO THEIR ARGUMENTS, I REALIZED, AS A POLITICIAN, THAT THEY WERE MAKING A GRAVE MISTAKE. THE OPINIONS OF THE VERY PEOPLE
AH, I SEE... IF THAT'S THE CASE...
BEFORE BEGINNING FULL-SCALE NEGOTIATIONS, IT HELPS TO KNOW EACH OTHER'S OPINIONS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD THE NEGOTIATIONS, SO WE CAN AVOID DISPUTES DURING THE ACTUAL TALKS.
AS SOON AS THEY ARRIVE, THEY SAY THEY WANT TO HOLD PRELIMINARY TALKS WITH US.
TOMORROW, SENATOR FOSTER WILL FINALLY BE COMING TO JAPAN.
PRELIMINARY TALKS?
14
.....
I'D LIKE YOU TO ATTEND THOSE PRELIMINARY TALKS AS WELL.
NOW, AS FOR YOUR FIRST ASSIGNMENT,

DON'T WORRY, I UNDERSTAND.
GOOD. BUT BE CAREFUL NOT TO GET INTO ANY DISPUTES WITH THE AMERICANS.
UNDERSTOOD. THEN I'LL ATTEND.
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTER
15
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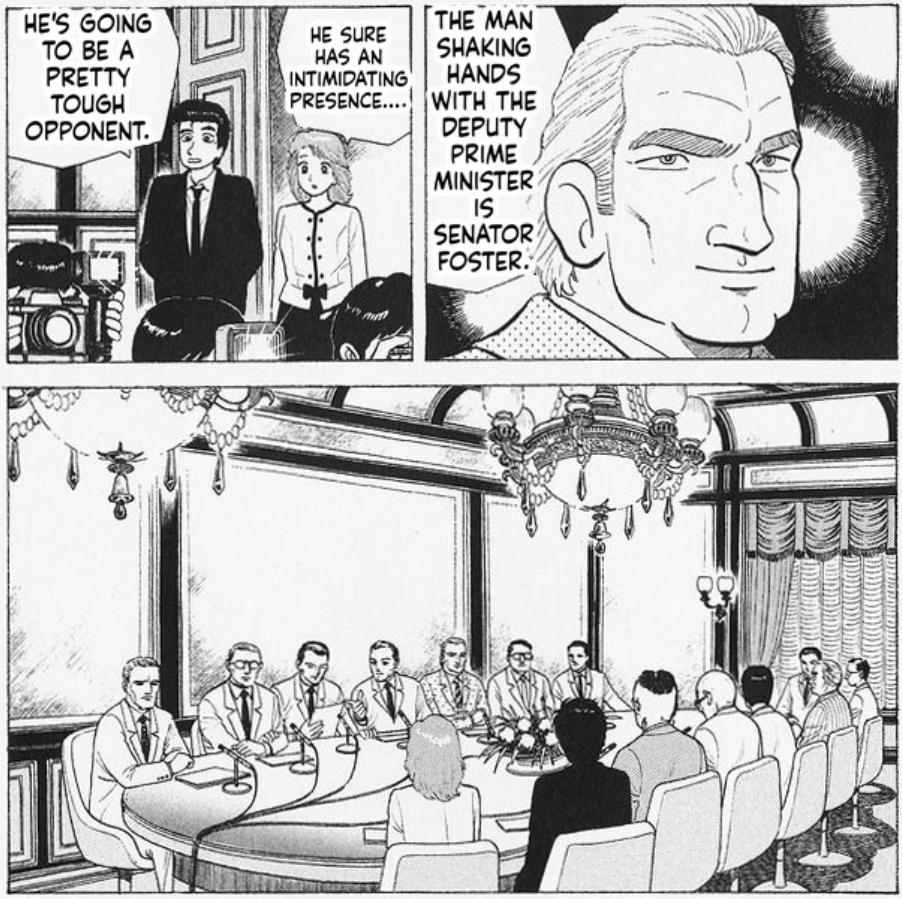
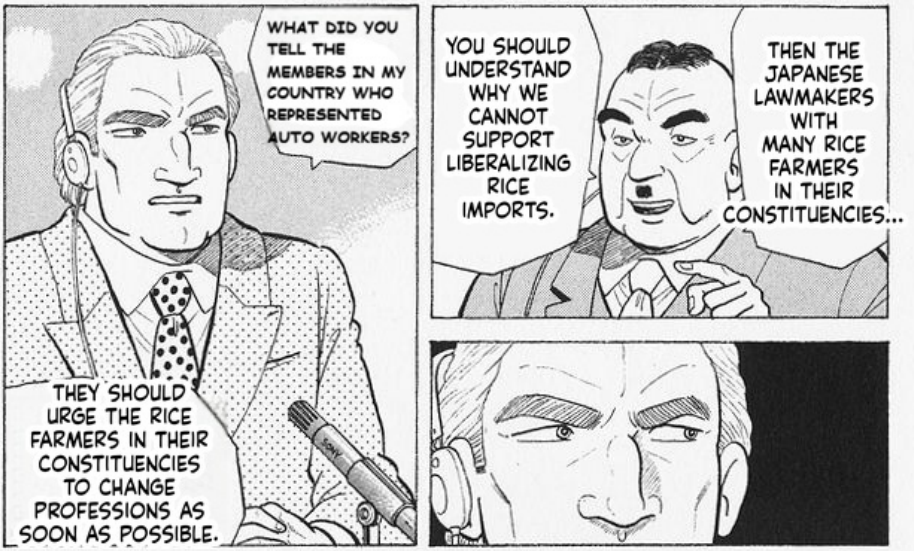
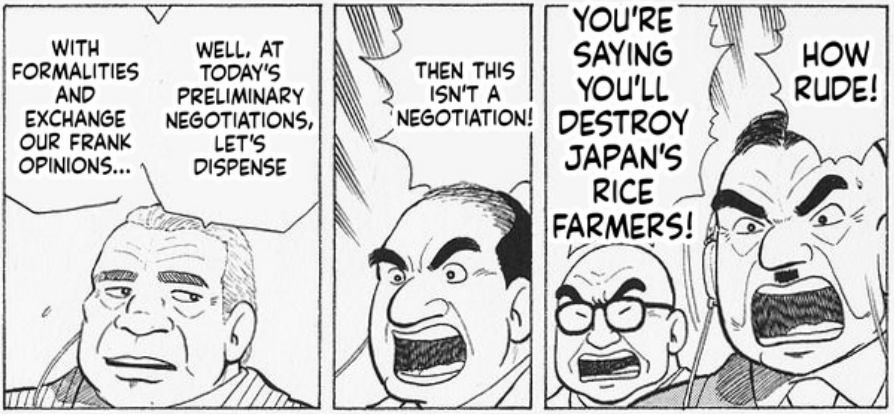
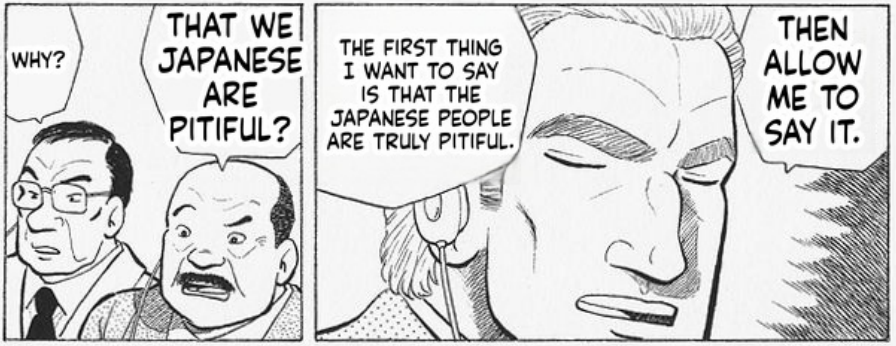
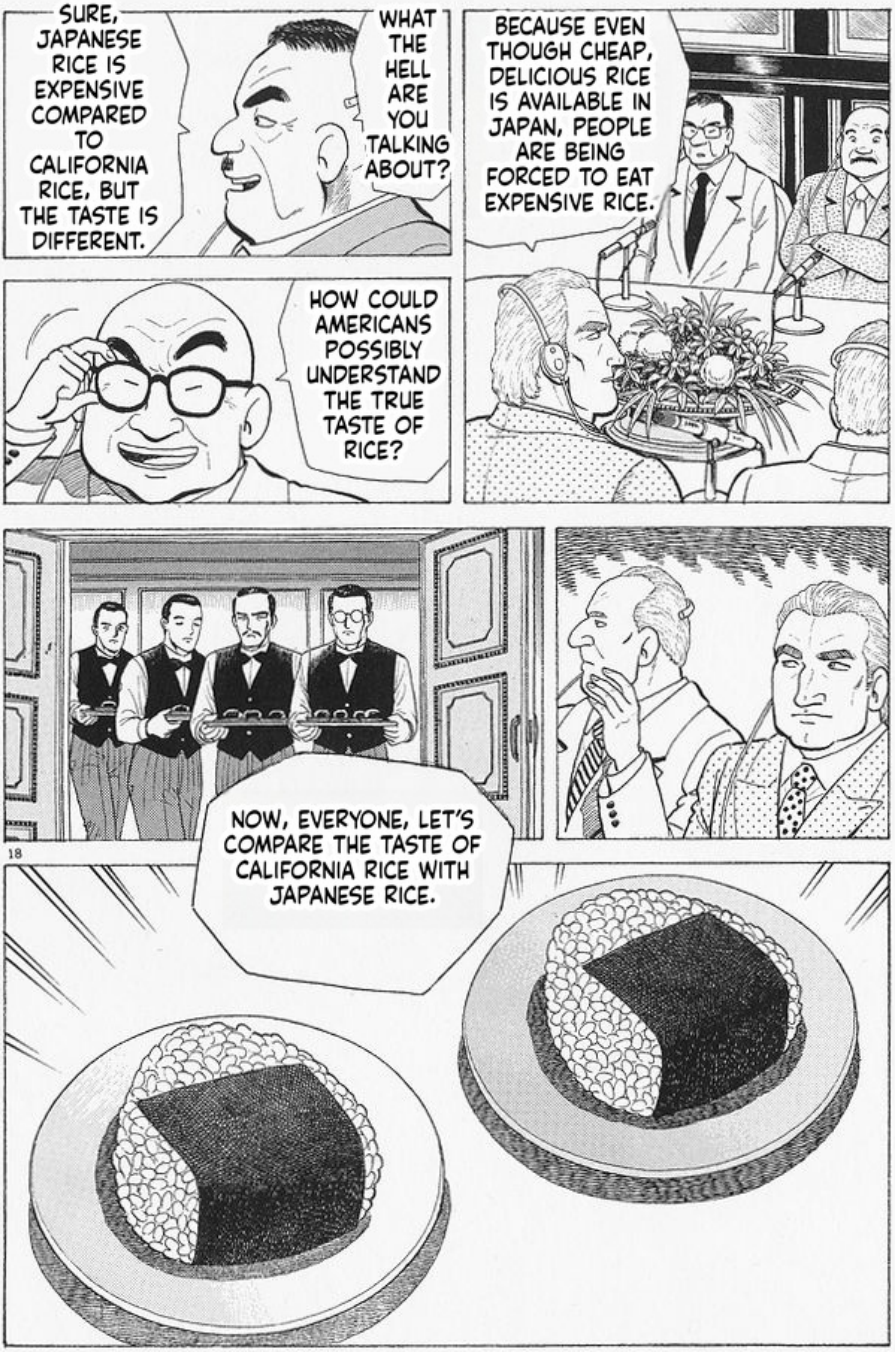

HE'S GOING TO BE A PRETTY TOUGH OPPONENT.
HE SURE HAS AN INTIMIDATING PRESENCE....
THE MAN SHAKING HANDS WITH THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER IS SENATOR FOSTER.
16
WORKING FOR ONE'S CONSTITUENTS IS ONLY NATURAL.
ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT EXPORTING CALIFORNIA RICE, I SEE.
SINCE SENATOR FOSTER REPRESENTS CALIFORNIA, HE IS PARTICULARLY


WHAT DID YOU TELL THE MEMBERS IN MY COUNTRY WHO REPRESENTED AUTO WORKERS?
THEY SHOULD URGE THE RICE FARMERS IN THEIR CONSTITUENCIES TO CHANGE PROFESSIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
YOU SHOULD UNDERSTAND WHY WE CANNOT SUPPORT LIBERALIZING RICE IMPORTS.
THEN THE JAPANESE LAWMAKERS WITH MANY RICE FARMERS IN THEIR CONSTITUENCIES...

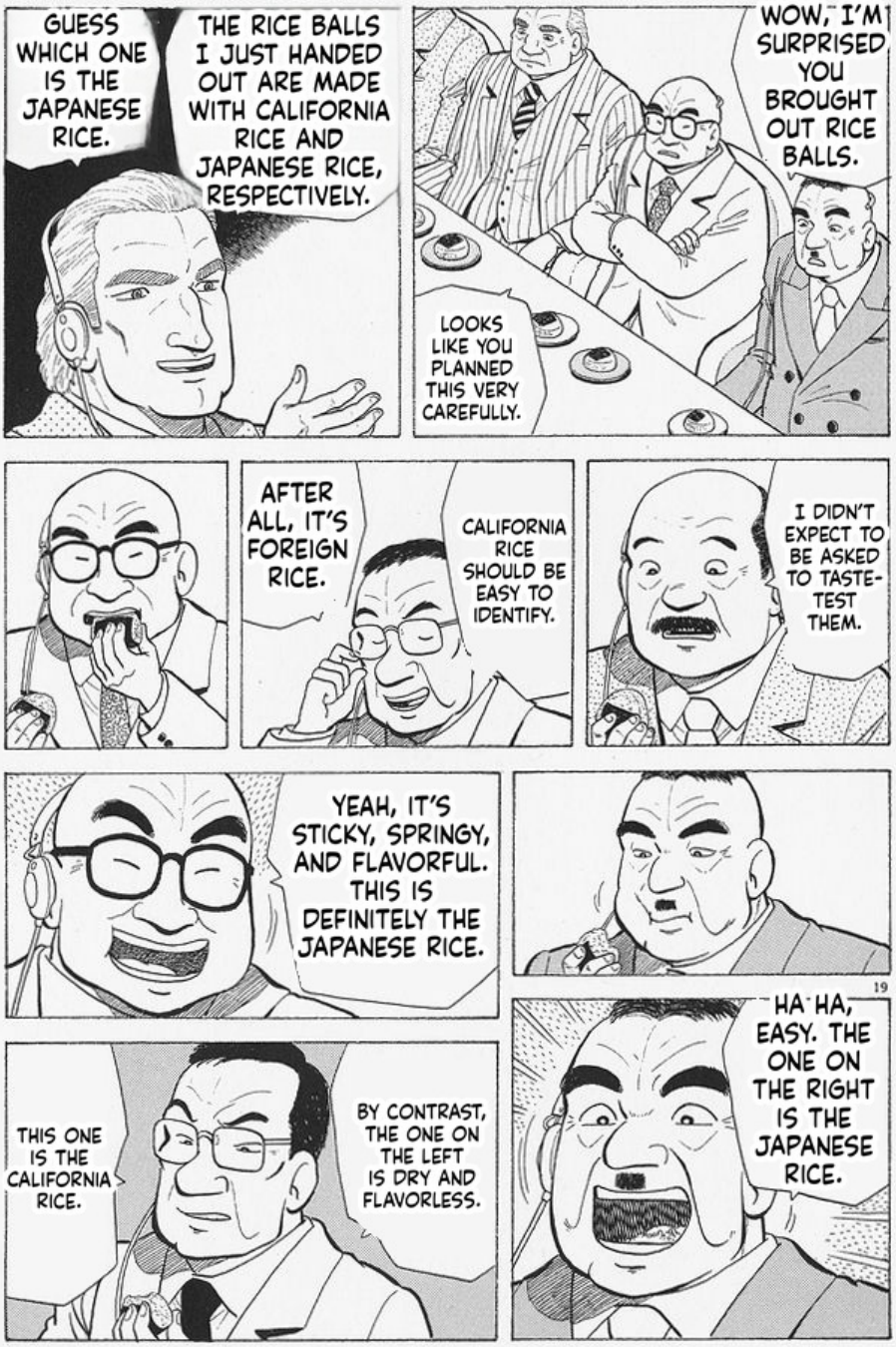

WITH FORMALITIES AND EXCHANGE OUR FRANK OPINIONS...
WELL, AT TODAY'S PRELIMINARY NEGOTIATIONS, LET'S DISPENSE
THEN THIS ISN'T A NEGOTIATION!
YOU'RE SAYING YOU'LL DESTROY JAPAN'S RICE FARMERS!
HOW RUDE!

17


WHY?
THAT WE JAPANESE ARE PITIFUL?
THE FIRST THING I WANT TO SAY IS THAT THE JAPANESE PEOPLE ARE TRULY PITIFUL.
THEN ALLOW ME TO SAY IT.

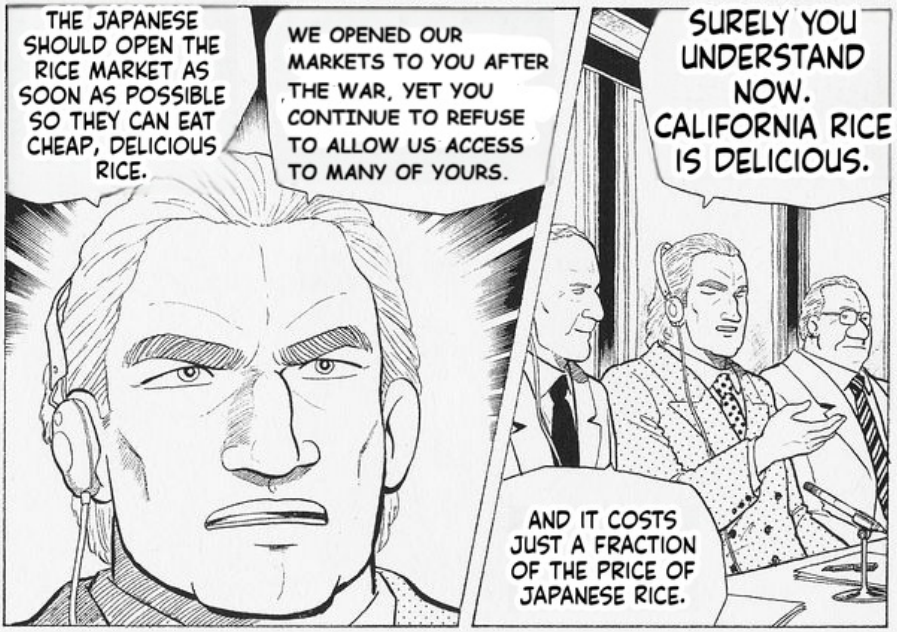

SURE, JAPANESE RICE IS EXPENSIVE COMPARED TO CALIFORNIA RICE, BUT THE TASTE IS DIFFERENT.
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
BECAUSE EVEN THOUGH CHEAP, DELICIOUS RICE IS AVAILABLE IN JAPAN, PEOPLE ARE BEING FORCED TO EAT EXPENSIVE RICE.
HOW COULD AMERICANS POSSIBLY UNDERSTAND THE TRUE TASTE OF RICE?
NOW, EVERYONE, LET'S COMPARE THE TASTE OF CALIFORNIA RICE WITH JAPANESE RICE.

18


GUESS WHICH ONE IS THE JAPANESE RICE.
THE RICE BALLS I JUST HANDED OUT ARE MADE WITH CALIFORNIA RICE AND JAPANESE RICE, RESPECTIVELY.
WOW, I'M SURPRISED YOU BROUGHT OUT RICE BALLS.
LOOKS LIKE YOU PLANNED THIS VERY CAREFULLY.
AFTER ALL, IT'S FOREIGN RICE.
CALIFORNIA RICE SHOULD BE EASY TO IDENTIFY.
I DIDN'T EXPECT TO BE ASKED TO TASTE-TEST THEM.
YEAH, IT'S STICKY, SPRINGY, AND FLAVORFUL. THIS IS DEFINITELY THE JAPANESE RICE.
19
HA HA, EASY. THE ONE ON THE RIGHT IS THE JAPANESE RICE.
THIS ONE IS THE CALIFORNIA RICE.
BY CONTRAST, THE ONE ON THE LEFT IS DRY AND FLAVORLESS.

YES, THIS MAY BE...
SOMETHING FEELS STRANGE.
I MUST APOLOGIZE TO EVERYONE.
WAS IT BECAUSE YOU FOUND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN JAPANESE RICE AND CALIFORNIA RICE TOO EASILY, AND GOT BORED?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, APOLOGIZE?
THAT'S DIRTY!
20
HOW COULD YOU DECEIVE US LIKE THAT!
YOU TRICKED US!
WHAT EVERYONE THOUGHT WAS JAPANESE RICE WAS PREMIUM CALIFORNIA RICE; THE OTHER WAS MEDIUM-GRADE.
IN FACT, BOTH OF THEM WERE CALIFORNIA RICE.

BUT IF I HADN'T GONE THIS FAR, I COULDN'T HAVE DISPELLED YOUR PREJUDICE AGAINST CALIFORNIA RICE.
DECEIVING YOU WAS CERTAINLY UNDERHANDED.


THE JAPANESE SHOULD OPEN THE RICE MARKET AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THEY CAN EAT CHEAP, DELICIOUS RICE.
WE OPENED OUR MARKETS TO YOU AFTER THE WAR, YET YOU CONTINUE TO REFUSE TO ALLOW US ACCESS TO MANY OF YOURS.
SURELY YOU UNDERSTAND NOW. CALIFORNIA RICE IS DELICIOUS.
AND IT COSTS JUST A FRACTION OF THE PRICE OF JAPANESE RICE.

THEIR HIGH QUALITY RICE IS AT LEAST ON PAR.
21
WELL, YOU GOT ME... YOU REALLY PULLED ONE OVER ON ME...

AT THIS RATE, WE WON'T BE ABLE TO SELL CALIFORNIA RICE IN JAPAN.
SENATOR FOSTER, I MUST ADVISE YOU–
YAMAOKA...
MR. YAMAOKA! THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TOLD YOU NOT TO CAUSE ANY TROUBLE TODAY, REMEMBER?!
22
WHY? TELL ME THE REASON.

第5話
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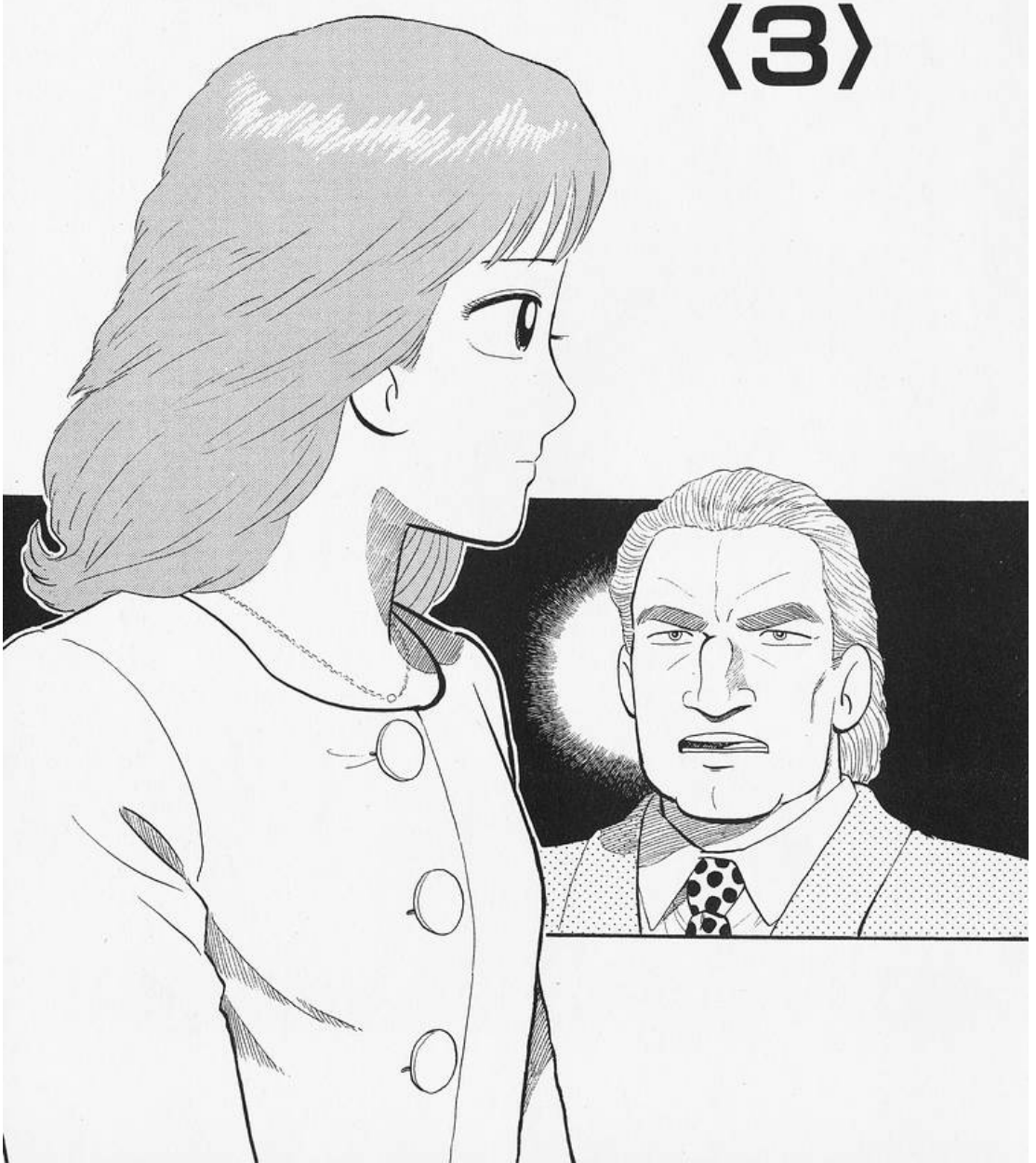
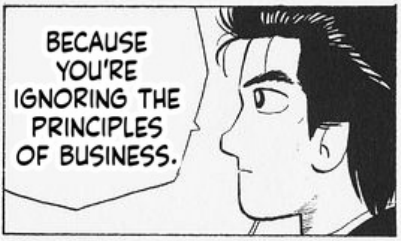
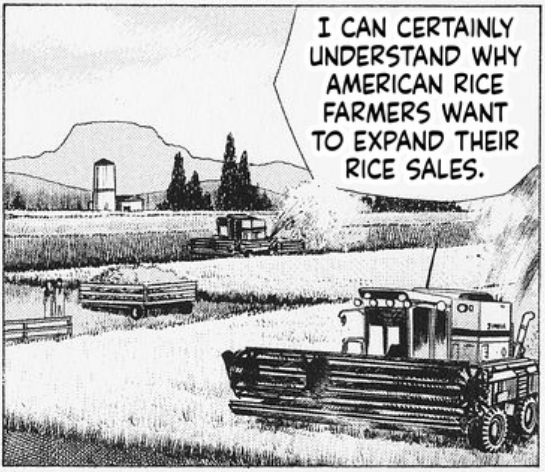



BECAUSE YOU'RE IGNORING THE PRINCIPLES OF BUSINESS.

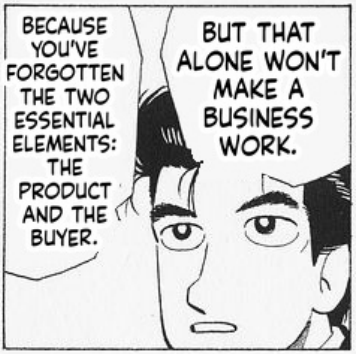
TELL ME WHY.
WHY CAN'T I USE MY APPROACH TO SELL CALIFORNIA RICE IN JAPAN?

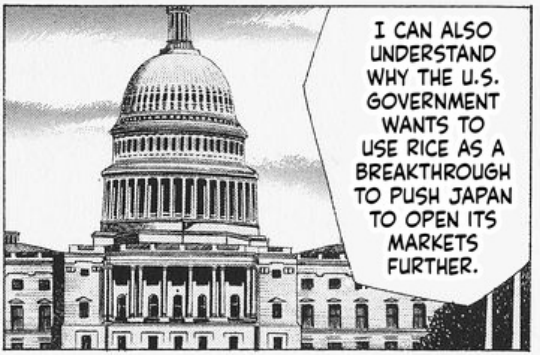
WHAT?

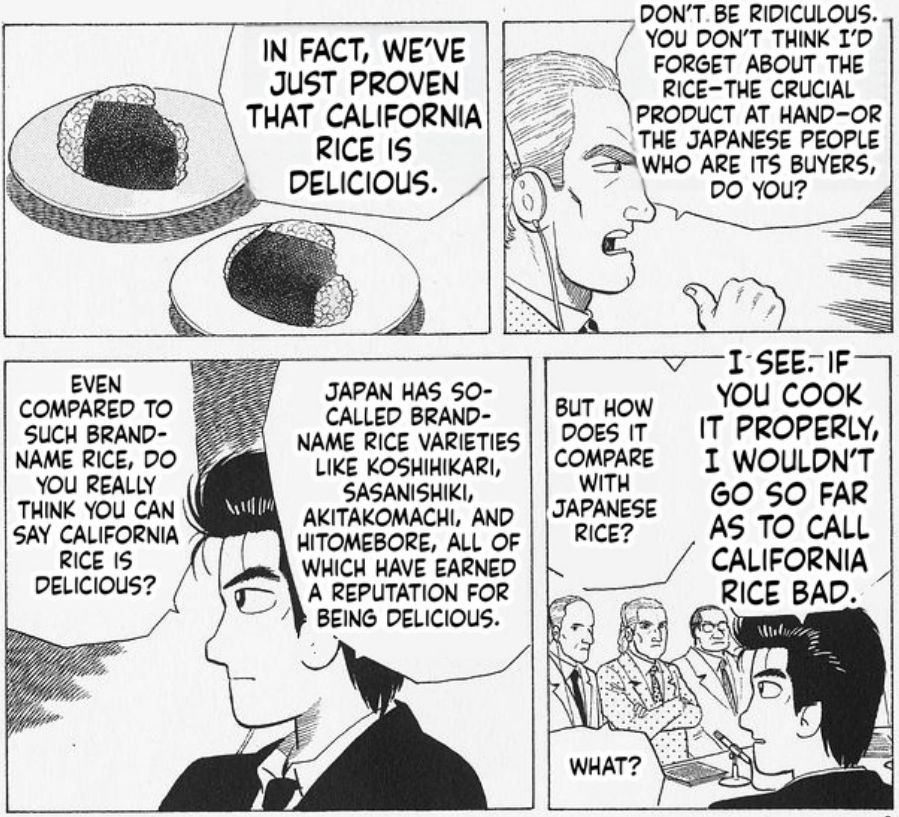

I CAN CERTAINLY UNDERSTAND WHY AMERICAN RICE FARMERS WANT TO EXPAND THEIR RICE SALES.

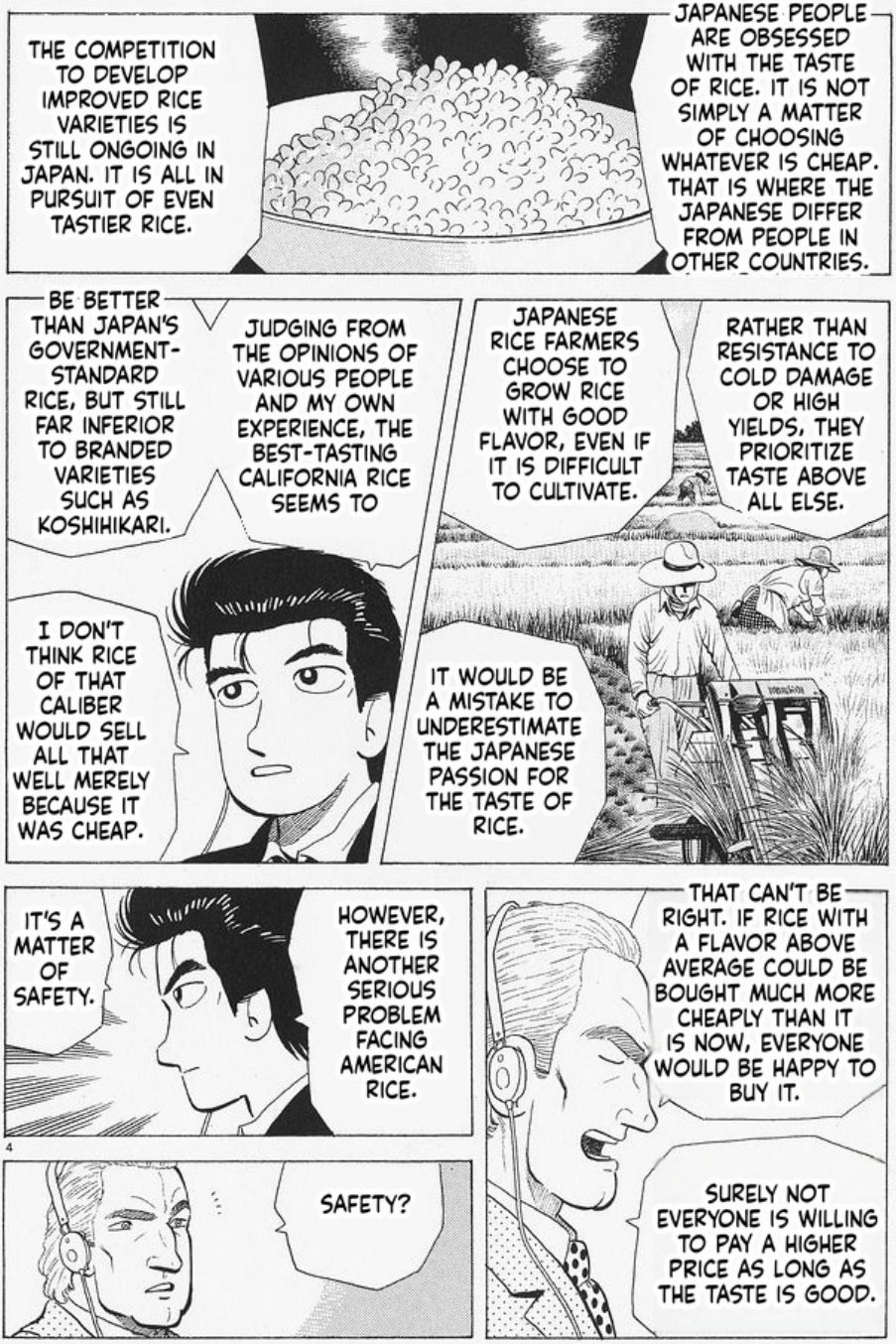
JUST THINK ABOUT IT. THERE ARE THREE ELEMENTS TO ANY BUSINESS: FIRST, THE SELLER; NEXT, THE PRODUCT; AND FINALLY, THE BUYER.
ALL YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT RIGHT NOW IS THE SELLER.

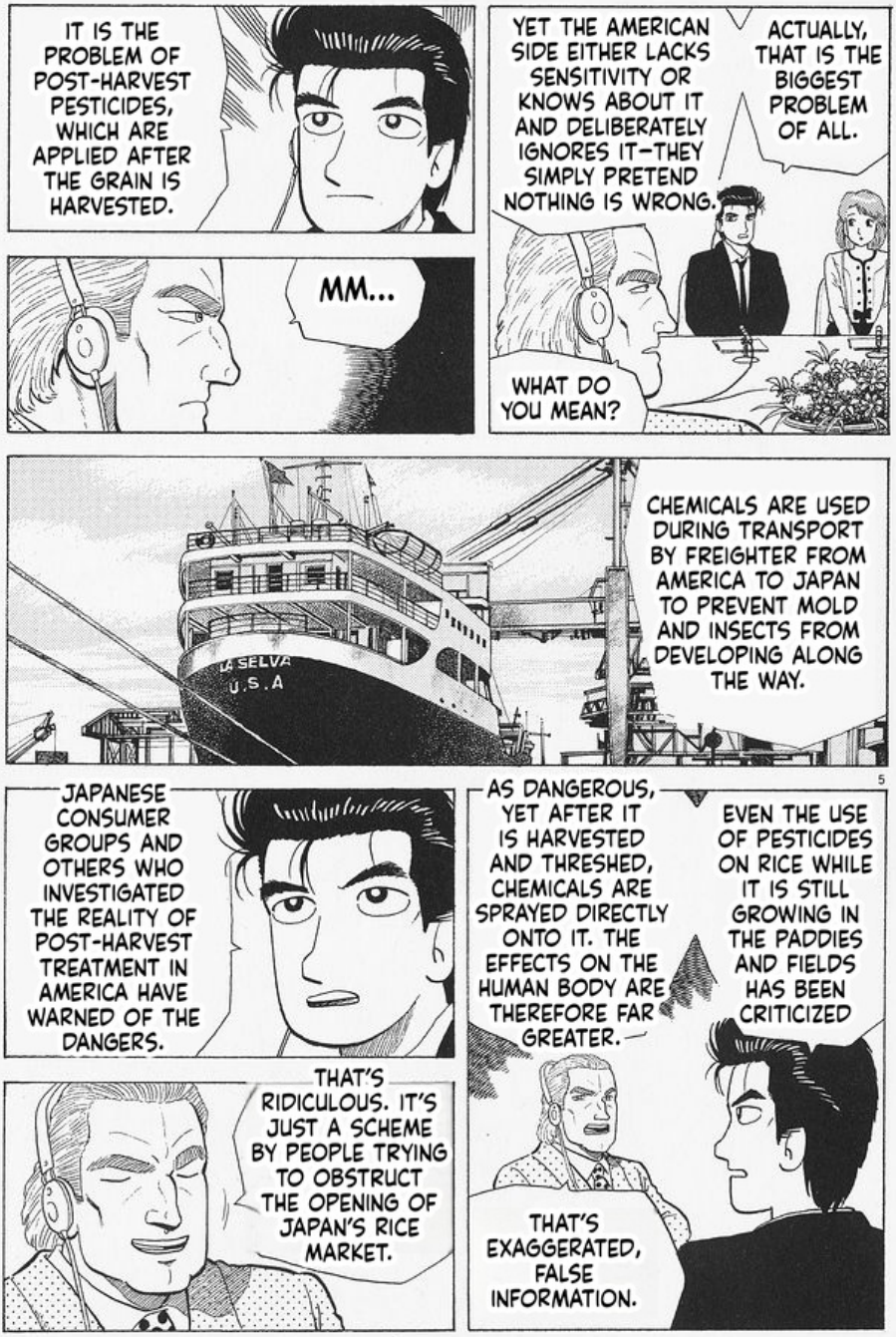
2


BUT THAT ALONE WON'T MAKE A BUSINESS WORK.
BECAUSE YOU'VE FORGOTTEN THE TWO ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS: THE PRODUCT AND THE BUYER.

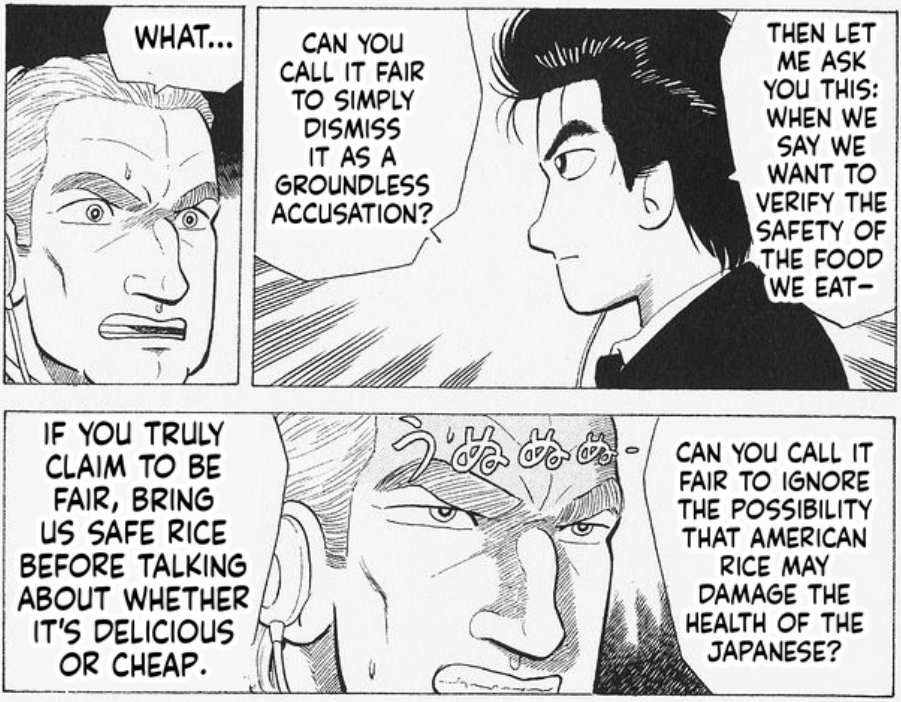

I CAN ALSO UNDERSTAND WHY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WANTS TO USE RICE AS A BREAKTHROUGH TO PUSH JAPAN TO OPEN ITS MARKETS FURTHER.

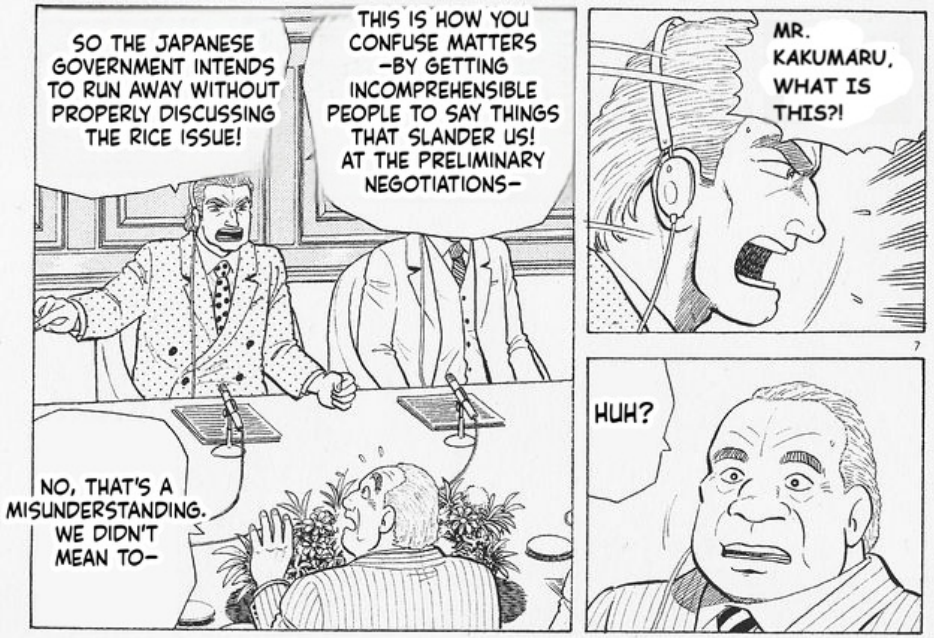

IN FACT, WE'VE JUST PROVEN THAT CALIFORNIA RICE IS DELICIOUS.
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS. YOU DON'T THINK I'D FORGET ABOUT THE RICE—THE CRUCIAL PRODUCT AT HAND—OR THE JAPANESE PEOPLE WHO ARE ITS BUYERS, DO YOU?
EVEN COMPARED TO SUCH BRAND-NAME RICE, DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN SAY CALIFORNIA RICE IS DELICIOUS?
JAPAN HAS SO-CALLED BRAND-NAME RICE VARIETIES LIKE KOSHIHIKARI, SASANISHIKI, AKITAKOMACHI, AND HITOMEBORE, ALL OF WHICH HAVE EARNED A REPUTATION FOR BEING DELICIOUS.
BUT HOW DOES IT COMPARE WITH JAPANESE RICE?
I SEE. IF YOU COOK IT PROPERLY, I WOULDN'T GO SO FAR AS TO CALL CALIFORNIA RICE BAD.
WHAT?
3
EVEN IF WE CONCEDE THAT KOSHIHIKARI AND SASANISHIKI TASTE BETTER, CALIFORNIA RICE IS FAR CHEAPER.
YOU CAN SAY CALIFORNIA RICE IS TASTY, BUT IT CAN'T POSSIBLY COMPETE WITH KOSHIHIKARI OR SASANISHIKI.
THAT'S RIGHT! THAT'S RIGHT!
NOW, THAT'S WHERE YOU FAIL TO UNDERSTAND THE JAPANESE PEOPLE WHO ARE YOUR BUYERS.

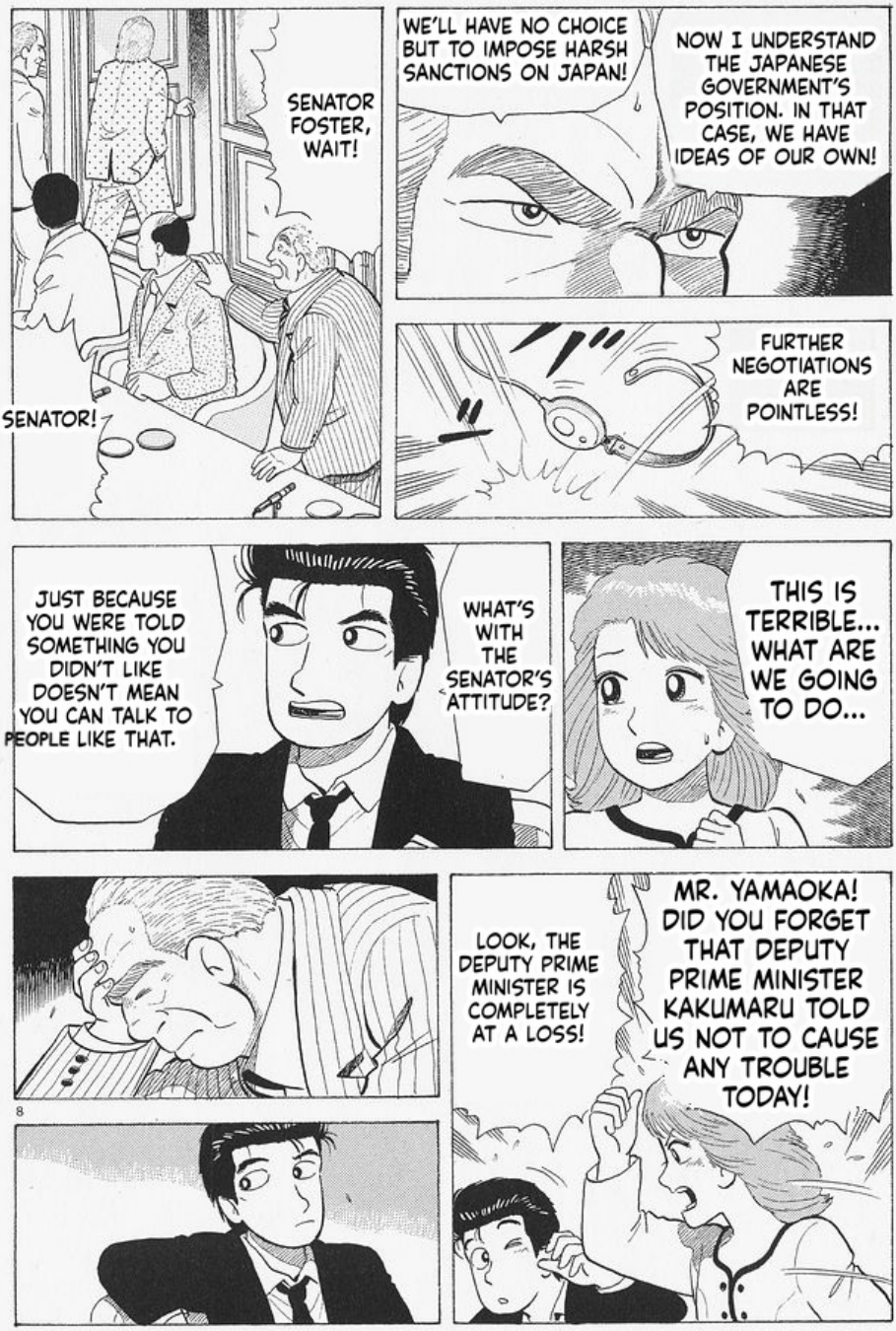

THE COMPETITION TO DEVELOP IMPROVED RICE VARIETIES IS STILL ONGOING IN JAPAN. IT IS ALL IN PURSUIT OF EVEN TASTIER RICE.
JAPANESE PEOPLE ARE OBSESSED WITH THE TASTE OF RICE. IT IS NOT SIMPLY A MATTER OF CHOOSING WHATEVER IS CHEAP. THAT IS WHERE THE JAPANESE DIFFER FROM PEOPLE IN OTHER COUNTRIES.
BE BETTER THAN JAPAN'S GOVERNMENT-STANDARD RICE, BUT STILL FAR INFERIOR TO BRANDED VARIETIES SUCH AS KOSHIHIKARI.
JUDGING FROM THE OPINIONS OF VARIOUS PEOPLE AND MY OWN EXPERIENCE, THE BEST-TASTING CALIFORNIA RICE SEEMS TO
I DON'T THINK RICE OF THAT CALIBER WOULD SELL ALL THAT WELL MERELY BECAUSE IT WAS CHEAP.
JAPANESE RICE FARMERS CHOOSE TO GROW RICE WITH GOOD FLAVOR, EVEN IF IT IS DIFFICULT TO CULTIVATE.
RATHER THAN RESISTANCE TO COLD DAMAGE OR HIGH YIELDS, THEY PRIORITIZE TASTE ABOVE ALL ELSE.
IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO UNDERESTIMATE THE JAPANESE PASSION FOR THE TASTE OF RICE.
IT'S A MATTER OF SAFETY.
HOWEVER, THERE IS ANOTHER SERIOUS PROBLEM FACING AMERICAN RICE.
4
SAFETY?
THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT. IF RICE WITH A FLAVOR ABOVE AVERAGE COULD BE BOUGHT MUCH MORE CHEAPLY THAN IT IS NOW, EVERYONE WOULD BE HAPPY TO BUY IT.
SURELY NOT EVERYONE IS WILLING TO PAY A HIGHER PRICE AS LONG AS THE TASTE IS GOOD.

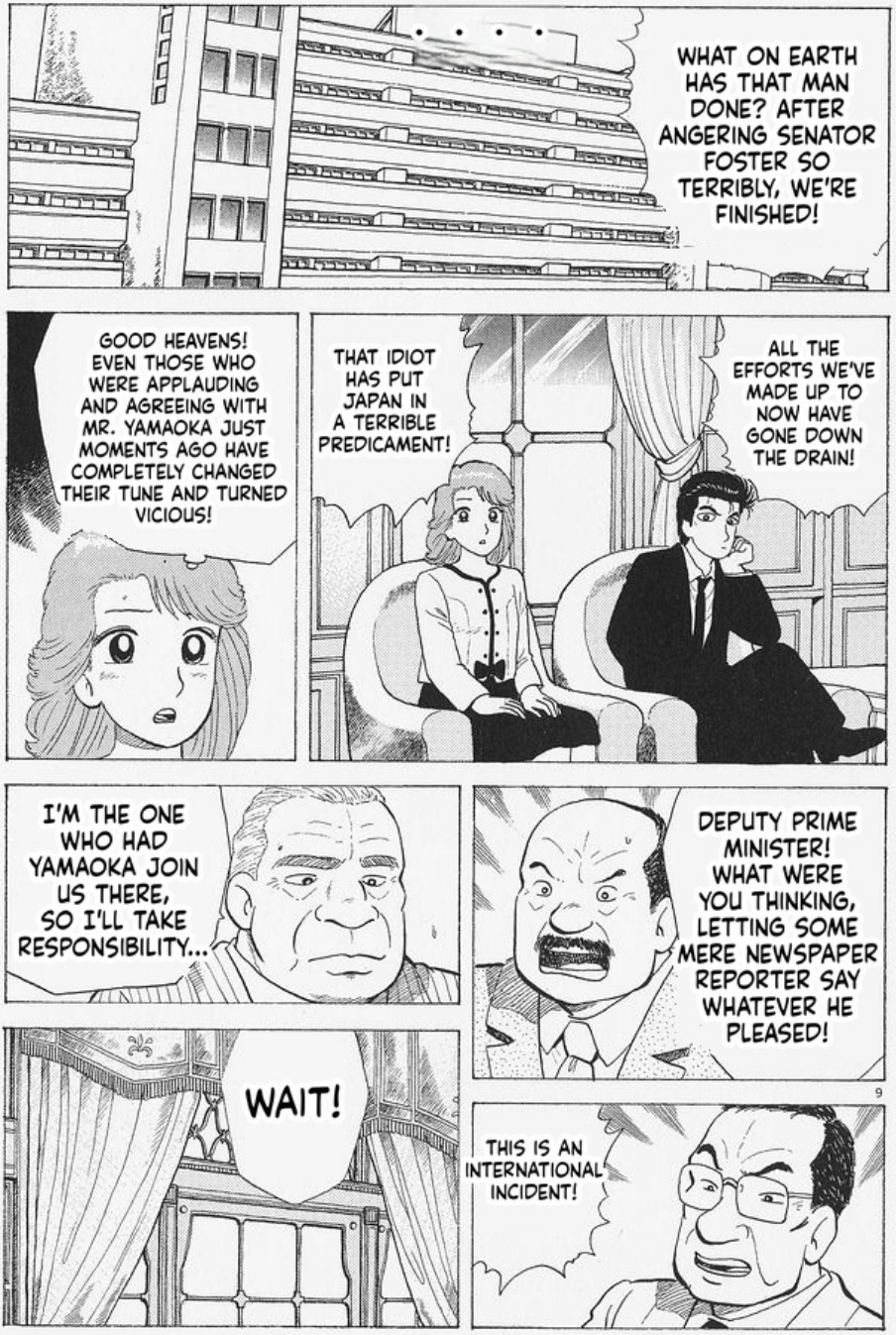

IT IS THE PROBLEM OF POST-HARVEST PESTICIDES, WHICH ARE APPLIED AFTER THE GRAIN IS HARVESTED.
MM...
YET THE AMERICAN SIDE EITHER LACKS SENSITIVITY OR KNOWS ABOUT IT AND DELIBERATELY IGNORES IT—THEY SIMPLY PRETEND NOTHING IS WRONG.
ACTUALLY, THAT IS THE BIGGEST PROBLEM OF ALL.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
LA SELVA
U.S.A
CHEMICALS ARE USED DURING TRANSPORT BY FREIGHTER FROM AMERICA TO JAPAN TO PREVENT MOLD AND INSECTS FROM DEVELOPING ALONG THE WAY.
5
JAPANESE CONSUMER GROUPS AND OTHERS WHO INVESTIGATED THE REALITY OF POST-HARVEST TREATMENT IN AMERICA HAVE WARNED OF THE DANGERS.
THAT'S RIDICULOUS. IT'S JUST A SCHEME BY PEOPLE TRYING TO OBSTRUCT THE OPENING OF JAPAN'S RICE MARKET.
AS DANGEROUS, YET AFTER IT IS HARVESTED AND THRESHED, CHEMICALS ARE SPRAYED DIRECTLY ONTO IT. THE EFFECTS ON THE HUMAN BODY ARE THEREFORE FAR GREATER.
EVEN THE USE OF PESTICIDES ON RICE WHILE IT IS STILL GROWING IN THE PADDIES AND FIELDS HAS BEEN CRITICIZED
THAT'S EXAGGERATED, FALSE INFORMATION.

SEE, THAT MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO SELL AMERICAN RICE IN JAPAN.
THERE SHOULDN'T BE ANY PROBLEM.
THEN, SENATOR, ARE YOU ACTUALLY FAMILIAR WITH THE REALITIES OF POST-HARVEST PRACTICES IN AMERICA?
THAT'S AN UNFOUNDED ACCUSATION! YOU'RE MAKING SUCH ACCUSATIONS SOLELY TO KEEP RICE OUT OF JAPAN!
NO ONE WILL BUY A PRODUCT IF YOU TRY TO SELL IT WITHOUT PROPERLY EXPLAINING ITS SAFETY. EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT THE DANGERS OF POST-HARVEST PESTICIDES.
YOU MERELY INSIST VERBALLY THAT THERE IS NO PROBLEM, BUT YOU MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE TO CONVINCE US.
WHO DO YOU THINK WOULD BUY DANGEROUS RICE, NO MATTER HOW CHEAP IT IS?
6
THAT IS RIGHT. THAT IS WHY WE ARE DEMANDING THAT JAPAN REFORM ITS UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES AND OPEN ITS RICE MARKET.
SENATOR FOSTER, I HAVE HEARD THAT AMERICANS ARE A PEOPLE WHO VALUE FAIRNESS ABOVE ALL ELSE.

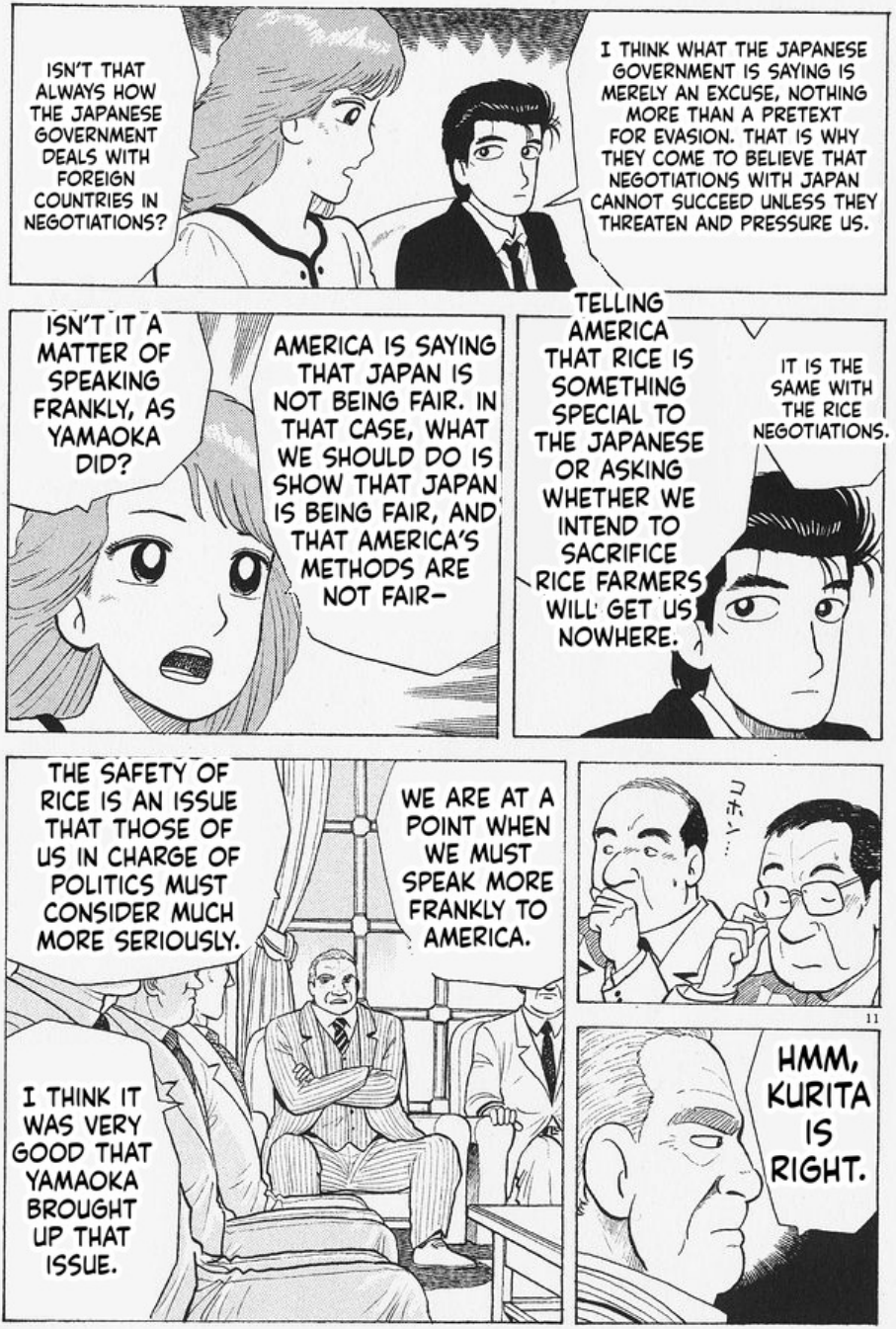

WHAT...
CAN YOU CALL IT FAIR TO SIMPLY DISMISS IT AS A GROUNDLESS ACCUSATION?
THEN LET ME ASK YOU THIS: WHEN WE SAY WE WANT TO VERIFY THE SAFETY OF THE FOOD WE EAT-
IF YOU TRULY CLAIM TO BE FAIR, BRING US SAFE RICE BEFORE TALKING ABOUT WHETHER IT'S DELICIOUS OR CHEAP.
うぬぬぬ-
CAN YOU CALL IT FAIR TO IGNORE THE POSSIBILITY THAT AMERICAN RICE MAY DAMAGE THE HEALTH OF THE JAPANESE?


SO THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO RUN AWAY WITHOUT PROPERLY DISCUSSING THE RICE ISSUE!
THIS IS HOW YOU CONFUSE MATTERS -BY GETTING INCOMPREHENSIBLE PEOPLE TO SAY THINGS THAT SLANDER US! AT THE PRELIMINARY NEGOTIATIONS-
NO, THAT'S A MISUNDERSTANDING. WE DIDN'T MEAN TO-
MR. KAKUMARU, WHAT IS THIS?!
HUH?


SENATOR FOSTER, WAIT!
SENATOR!
WE'LL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO IMPOSE HARSH SANCTIONS ON JAPAN!
NOW I UNDERSTAND THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION. IN THAT CASE, WE HAVE IDEAS OF OUR OWN!
FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS ARE POINTLESS!
JUST BECAUSE YOU WERE TOLD SOMETHING YOU DIDN'T LIKE DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN TALK TO PEOPLE LIKE THAT.
WHAT'S WITH THE SENATOR'S ATTITUDE?
THIS IS TERRIBLE... WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO...
8
LOOK, THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER IS COMPLETELY AT A LOSS!
MR. YAMAOKA! DID YOU FORGET THAT DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER KAKUMARU TOLD US NOT TO CAUSE ANY TROUBLE TODAY!

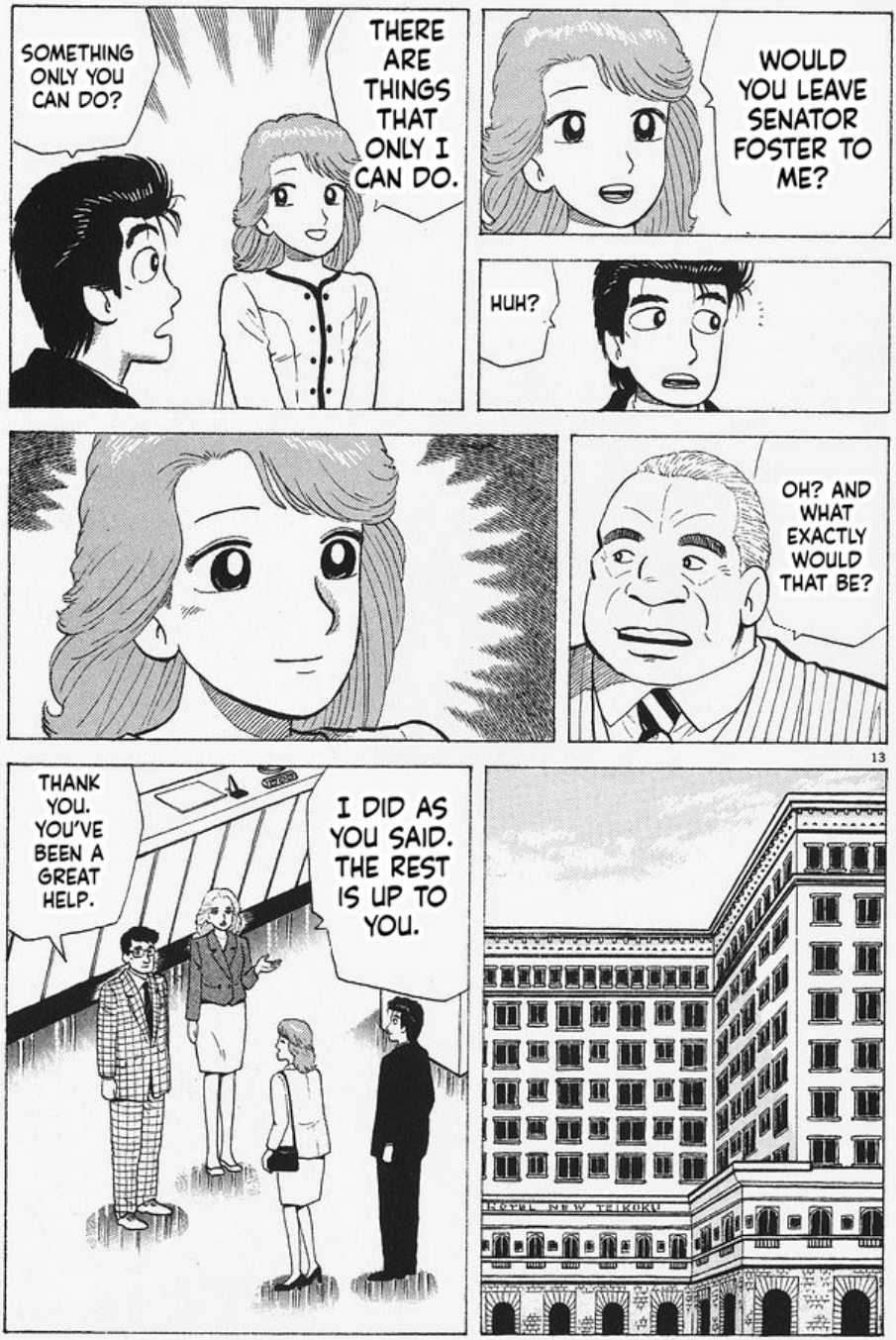

WHAT ON EARTH HAS THAT MAN DONE? AFTER ANGERING SENATOR FOSTER SO TERRIBLY, WE'RE FINISHED!
GOOD HEAVENS! EVEN THOSE WHO WERE APPLAUDING AND AGREEING WITH MR. YAMAOKA JUST MOMENTS AGO HAVE COMPLETELY CHANGED THEIR TUNE AND TURNED VICIOUS!
THAT IDIOT HAS PUT JAPAN IN A TERRIBLE PREDICAMENT!
ALL THE EFFORTS WE'VE MADE UP TO NOW HAVE GONE DOWN THE DRAIN!
I'M THE ONE WHO HAD YAMAOKA JOIN US THERE, SO I'LL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY...
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER! WHAT WERE YOU THINKING, LETTING SOME MERE NEWSPAPER REPORTER SAY WHATEVER HE PLEASED!
WAIT!
THIS IS AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT!

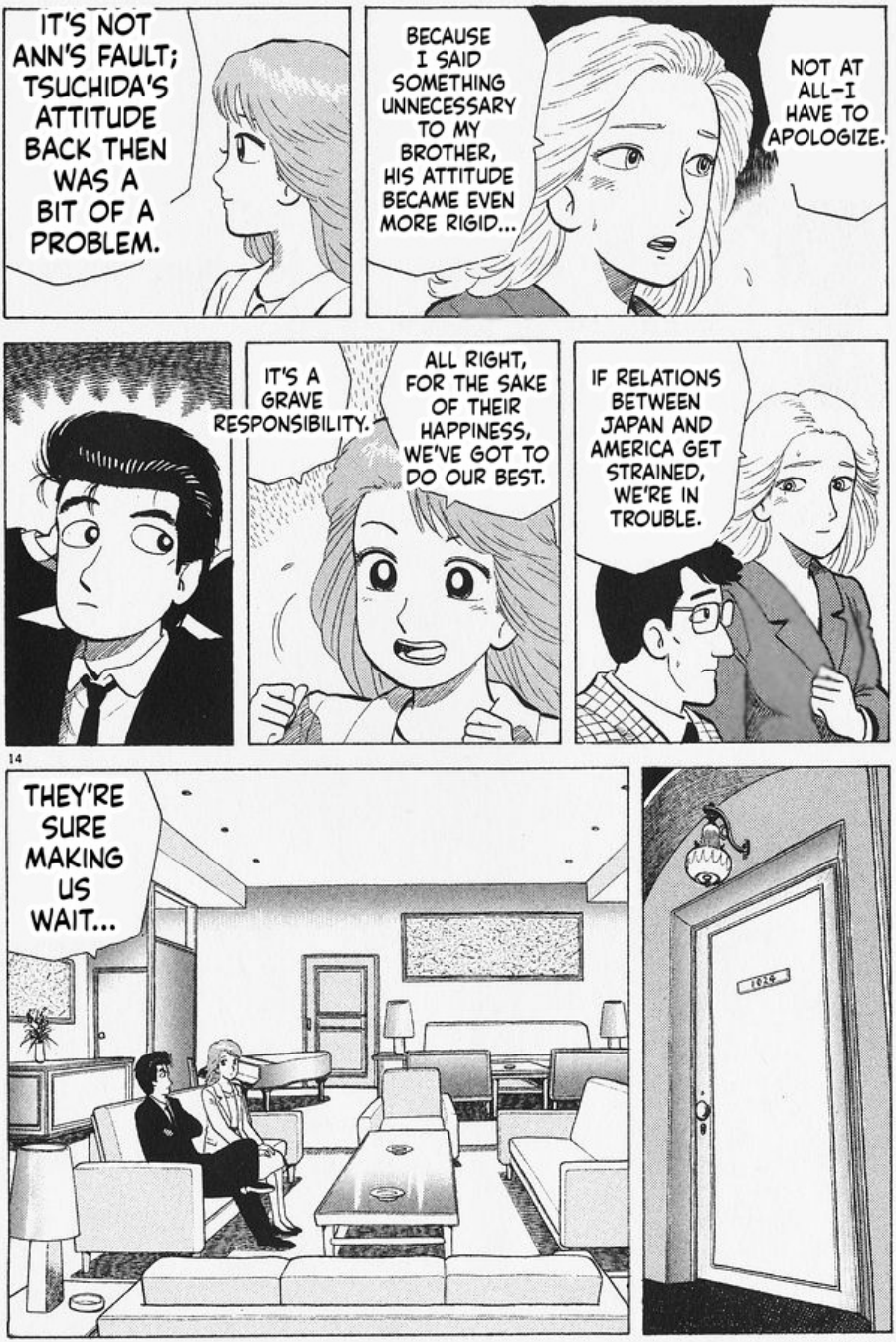
*TL NOTE: PLEASE FORGIVE THE WONKY SPACING IN THE BOTTOM LEFT PANEL. I'M NOT SURE WHY IT DID THAT.

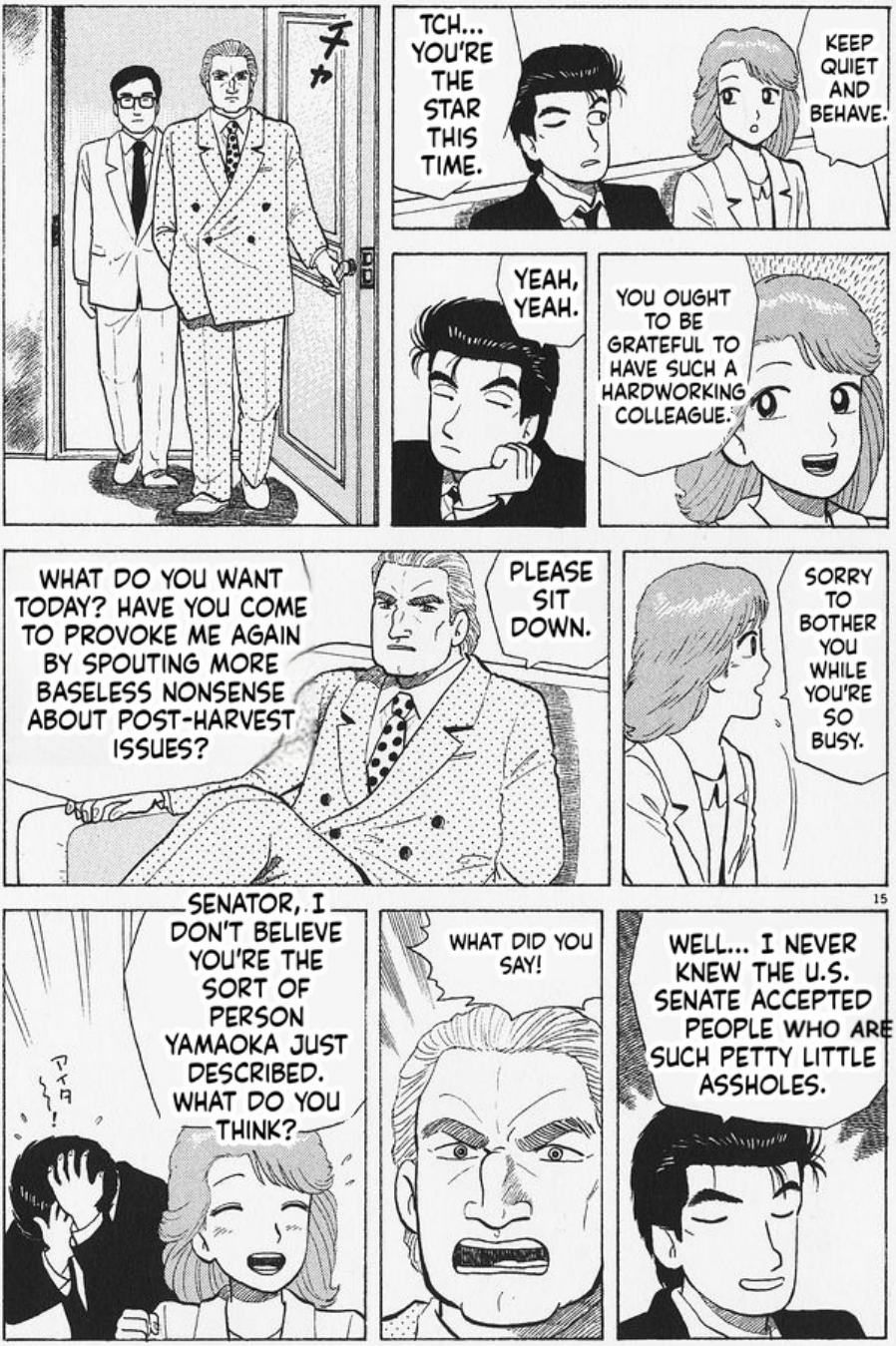

ISN'T THAT ALWAYS HOW THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT DEALS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES IN NEGOTIATIONS?
I THINK WHAT THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT IS SAYING IS MERELY AN EXCUSE, NOTHING MORE THAN A PRETEXT FOR EVASION. THAT IS WHY THEY COME TO BELIEVE THAT NEGOTIATIONS WITH JAPAN CANNOT SUCCEED UNLESS THEY THREATEN AND PRESSURE US.
ISN'T IT A MATTER OF SPEAKING FRANKLY, AS YAMAOKA DID?
AMERICA IS SAYING THAT JAPAN IS NOT BEING FAIR. IN THAT CASE, WHAT WE SHOULD DO IS SHOW THAT JAPAN IS BEING FAIR, AND THAT AMERICA'S METHODS ARE NOT FAIR—
TELLING AMERICA THAT RICE IS SOMETHING SPECIAL TO THE JAPANESE OR ASKING WHETHER WE INTEND TO SACRIFICE RICE FARMERS WILL GET US NOWHERE.
IT IS THE SAME WITH THE RICE NEGOTIATIONS.
THE SAFETY OF RICE IS AN ISSUE THAT THOSE OF US IN CHARGE OF POLITICS MUST CONSIDER MUCH MORE SERIOUSLY.
WE ARE AT A POINT WHEN WE MUST SPEAK MORE FRANKLY TO AMERICA.
I THINK IT WAS VERY GOOD THAT YAMAOKA BROUGHT UP THAT ISSUE.
ハテ…
11
HMM, KURITA IS RIGHT.

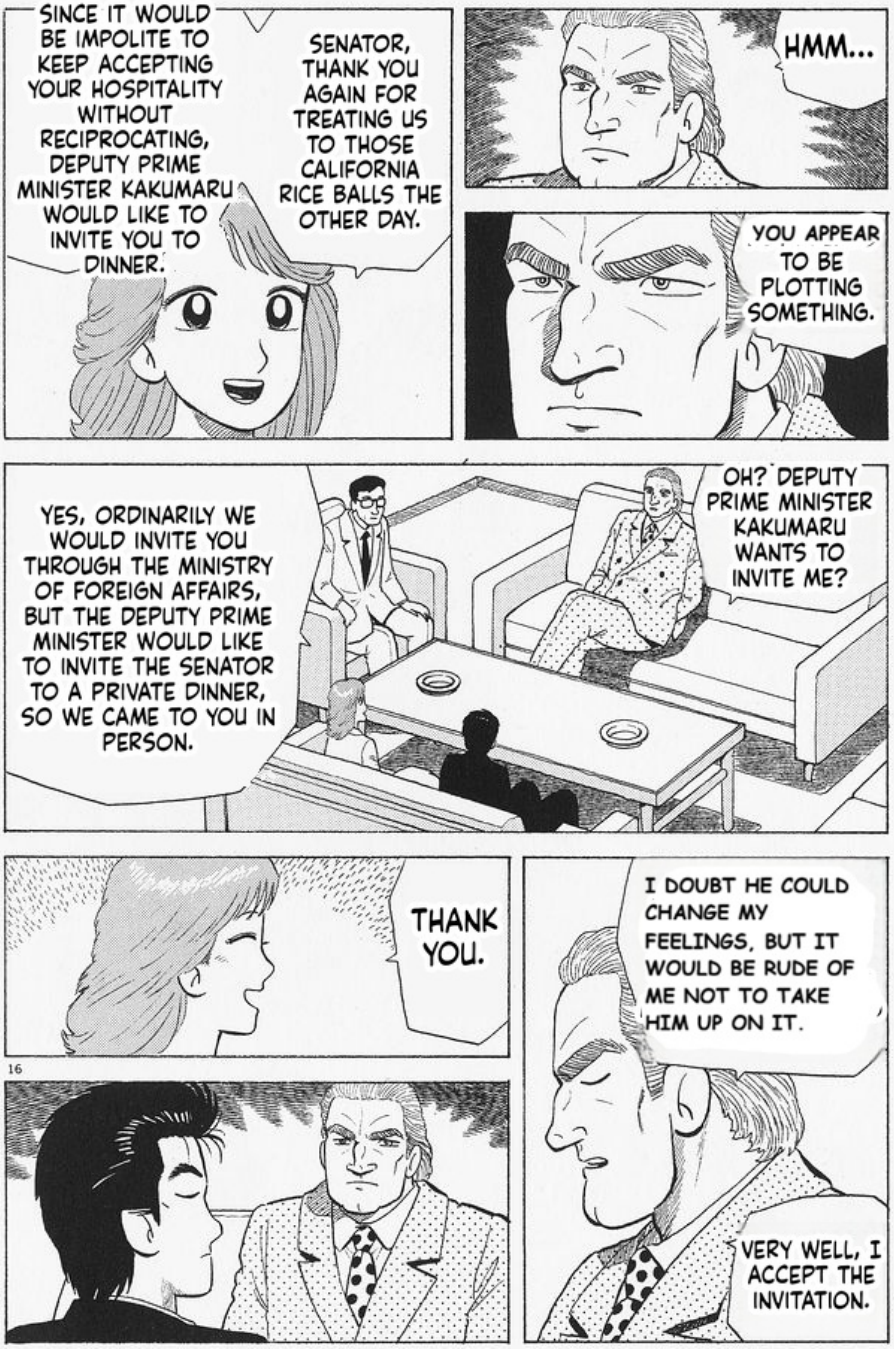
OUR ABILITIES AS POLITICIANS ARE BEING PUT TO THE TEST.
FROM HERE ON OUT, THAT'S THE POLITICIANS' JOB.
HE'S FURIOUS ABOUT WHAT THAT MAN SAID AND IS THREATENING TO IMPOSE SANCTIONS ON JAPAN.
BUT WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT SENATOR FOSTER?
UH, THANKS...
YAMAOKA, KURITA REALLY SAVED US TODAY.
NOW THE QUESTION IS HOW WE'RE GOING TO DEAL WITH SENATOR FOSTER...

12


SOMETHING ONLY YOU CAN DO?
THERE ARE THINGS THAT ONLY I CAN DO.
WOULD YOU LEAVE SENATOR FOSTER TO ME?
HUH?
OH? AND WHAT EXACTLY WOULD THAT BE?
13
THANK YOU. YOU'VE BEEN A GREAT HELP.
I DID AS YOU SAID. THE REST IS UP TO YOU.
HOTEL NEW TAIKOKU

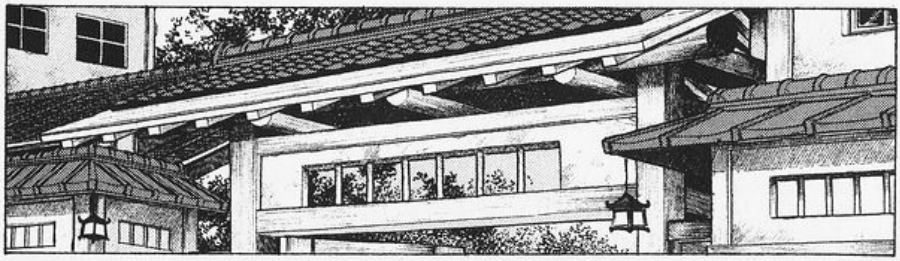

IT'S NOT ANN'S FAULT; TSUCHIDA'S ATTITUDE BACK THEN WAS A BIT OF A PROBLEM.
BECAUSE I SAID SOMETHING UNNECESSARY TO MY BROTHER, HIS ATTITUDE BECAME EVEN MORE RIGID...
NOT AT ALL—I HAVE TO APOLOGIZE.
IT'S A GRAVE RESPONSIBILITY.
ALL RIGHT, FOR THE SAKE OF THEIR HAPPINESS, WE'VE GOT TO DO OUR BEST.
IF RELATIONS BETWEEN JAPAN AND AMERICA GET STRAINED, WE'RE IN TROUBLE.
14
THEY'RE SURE MAKING US WAIT...
1024


チャ
TCH... YOU'RE THE STAR THIS TIME.
KEEP QUIET AND BEHAVE.
YEAH, YEAH.
YOU OUGHT TO BE GRATEFUL TO HAVE SUCH A HARDWORKING COLLEAGUE.
WHAT DO YOU WANT TODAY? HAVE YOU COME TO PROVOKE ME AGAIN BY SPOUTING MORE BASELESS NONSENSE ABOUT POST-HARVEST ISSUES?
PLEASE SIT DOWN.
SORRY TO BOTHER YOU WHILE YOU'RE SO BUSY.
15
SENATOR, I DON'T BELIEVE YOU'RE THE SORT OF PERSON YAMAOKA JUST DESCRIBED. WHAT DO YOU THINK?
アイロ!
WHAT DID YOU SAY!
WELL... I NEVER KNEW THE U.S. SENATE ACCEPTED PEOPLE WHO ARE SUCH PETTY LITTLE ASSHOLES.


SENATOR, THANK YOU AGAIN FOR TREATING US TO THOSE CALIFORNIA RICE BALLS THE OTHER DAY.
SINCE IT WOULD BE IMPOLITE TO KEEP ACCEPTING YOUR HOSPITALITY WITHOUT RECIPROCATING, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER KAKUMARU WOULD LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO DINNER.
HMM...
YOU APPEAR TO BE PLOTTING SOMETHING.
OH? DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER KAKUMARU WANTS TO INVITE ME?
YES, ORDINARILY WE WOULD INVITE YOU THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, BUT THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER WOULD LIKE TO INVITE THE SENATOR TO A PRIVATE DINNER, SO WE CAME TO YOU IN PERSON.
THANK YOU.
I DOUBT HE COULD CHANGE MY FEELINGS, BUT IT WOULD BE RUDE OF ME NOT TO TAKE HIM UP ON IT.
VERY WELL, I ACCEPT THE INVITATION.

16

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
OH, I ALREADY DID IT.
YOU TOLD THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING ONLY YOU COULD DO.
YES.
NEC
富士銀行
WHAT WAS THIS ARRANGEMENT, ANYWAY?
YES, YESTERDAY, I ARRANGED EVERYTHING TO INVITE THE SENATOR. IT WAS SOMETHING ONLY I COULD HAVE DONE.
WHAT? IT'S ALREADY OVER?
HMPH, FINE. DO WHATEVER YOU WANT.
OH, I CAN'T TELL YOU THAT.
17
IS THAT SO?
YOU'RE REALLY DRAGGING THIS OUT.

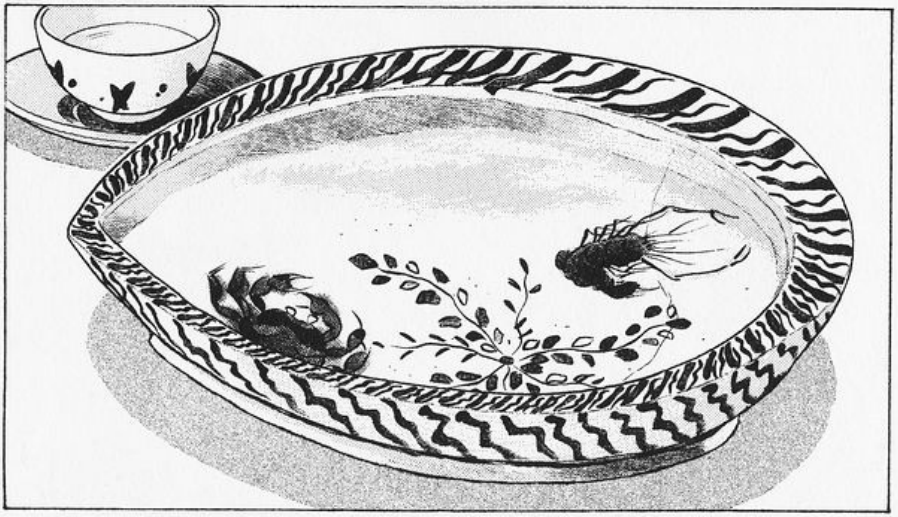


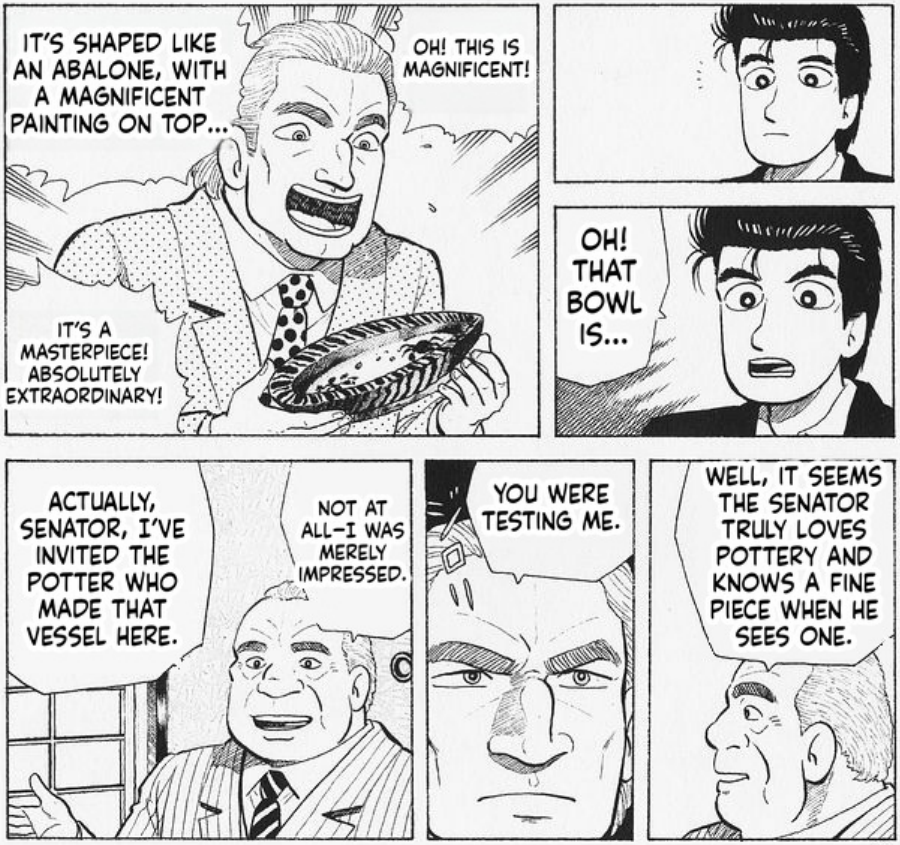
AFTER WORK, I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO GOING TO THE MUSEUM AND FINDING SOMETHING TO TAKE HOME.
I LOVE JAPANESE CERAMICS TOO.

THEN HOW ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THIS?

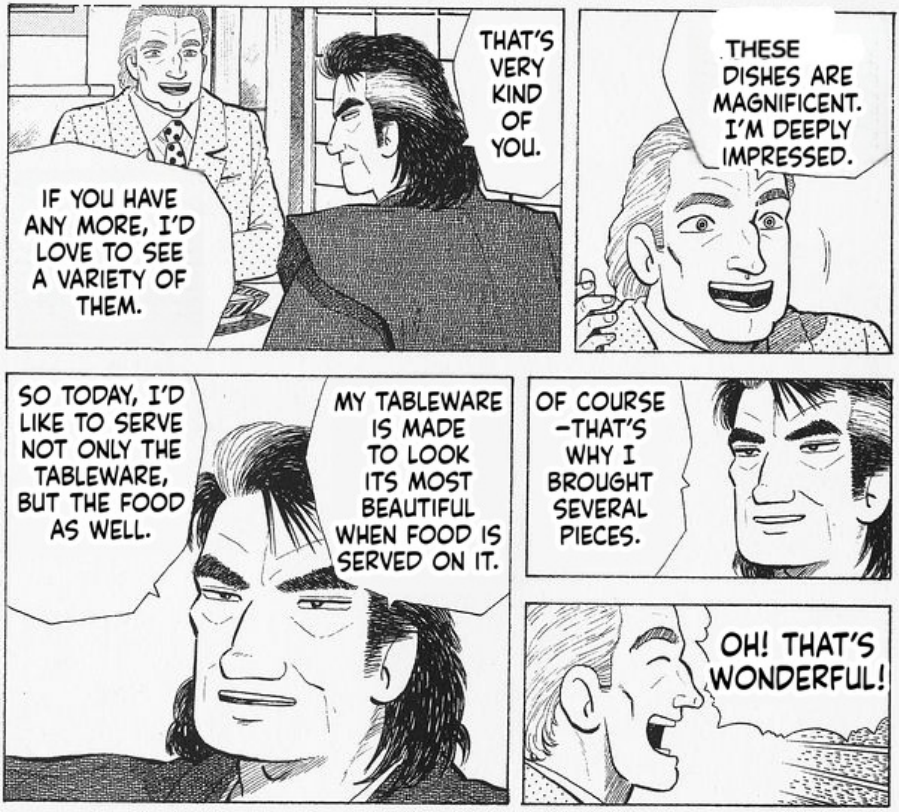
I HEAR THAT YOU'RE INTERESTED IN ORIENTAL CERAMICS, SENATOR.

18

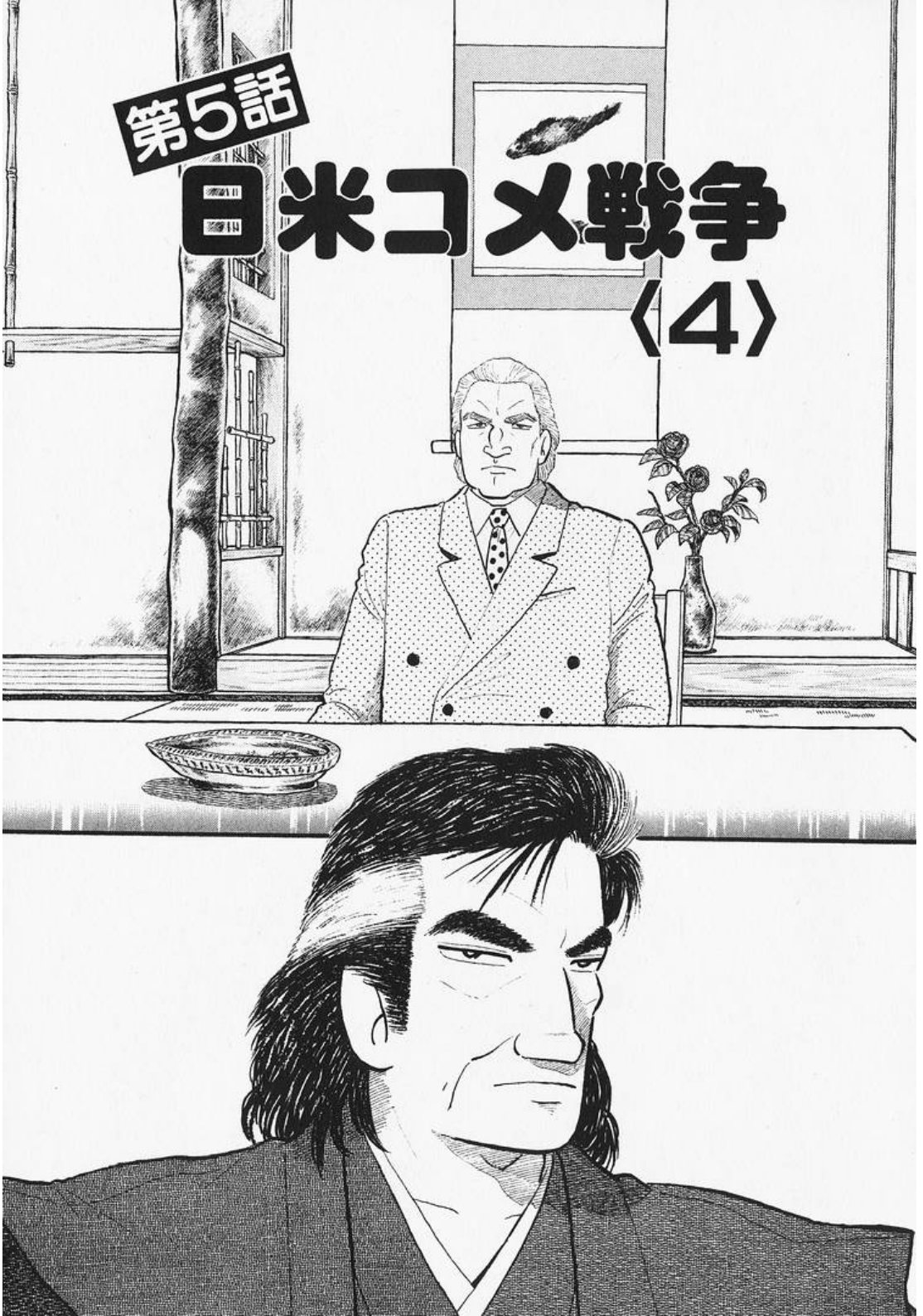



IT'S SHAPED LIKE AN ABALONE, WITH A MAGNIFICENT PAINTING ON TOP...
OH! THIS IS MAGNIFICENT!
IT'S A MASTERPIECE! ABSOLUTELY EXTRAORDINARY!
OH! THAT BOWL IS...
ACTUALLY, SENATOR, I'VE INVITED THE POTTER WHO MADE THAT VESSEL HERE.
NOT AT ALL—I WAS MERELY IMPRESSED.
YOU WERE TESTING ME.
WELL, IT SEEMS THE SENATOR TRULY LOVES POTTERY AND KNOWS A FINE PIECE WHEN HE SEES ONE.
19
KURITA!
ONE OF JAPAN'S FOREMOST ARTISTS, AND ALSO A LEADING AUTHORITY ON CUISINE.
OH! HOW FASCINATING. I'D CERTAINLY LIKE TO MEET THEM!
WHAT?!

EXCUSE ME.
TELL HIM TO COME IN.
PLEASE, COME IN PROFESSOR KAIBARA.
20
SENATOR, MY NAME IS YUZAN KAIBARA.


THAT'S VERY KIND OF YOU.
IF YOU HAVE ANY MORE, I'D LOVE TO SEE A VARIETY OF THEM.
THESE DISHES ARE MAGNIFICENT. I'M DEEPLY IMPRESSED.
SO TODAY, I'D LIKE TO SERVE NOT ONLY THE TABLEWARE, BUT THE FOOD AS WELL.
MY TABLEWARE IS MADE TO LOOK ITS MOST BEAUTIFUL WHEN FOOD IS SERVED ON IT.
OF COURSE -THAT'S WHY I BROUGHT SEVERAL PIECES.
OH! THAT'S WONDERFUL!
21
.....
I HEAR YOU'RE ALSO A LEADING AUTHORITY ON CUISINE, SO I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT!
OH! HOW SPLENDID!

TODAY, I'VE PREPARED A DISH RELATED TO THAT.
SENATOR FOSTER IS WORKING HARD TO GET JAPAN TO IMPORT AMERICAN RICE, SO
WHAT!?
22
KURITA, WHAT DID YOU DO?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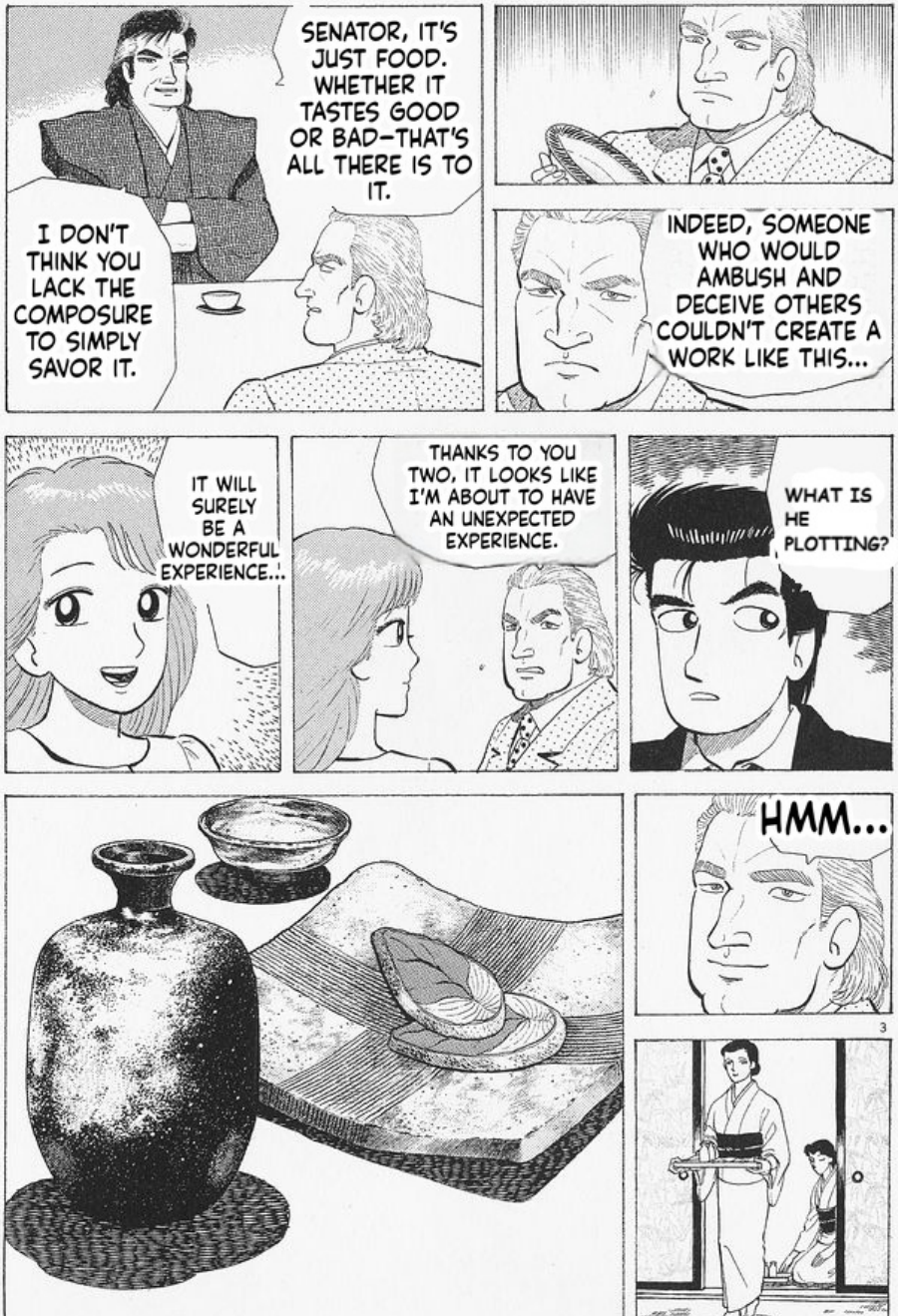
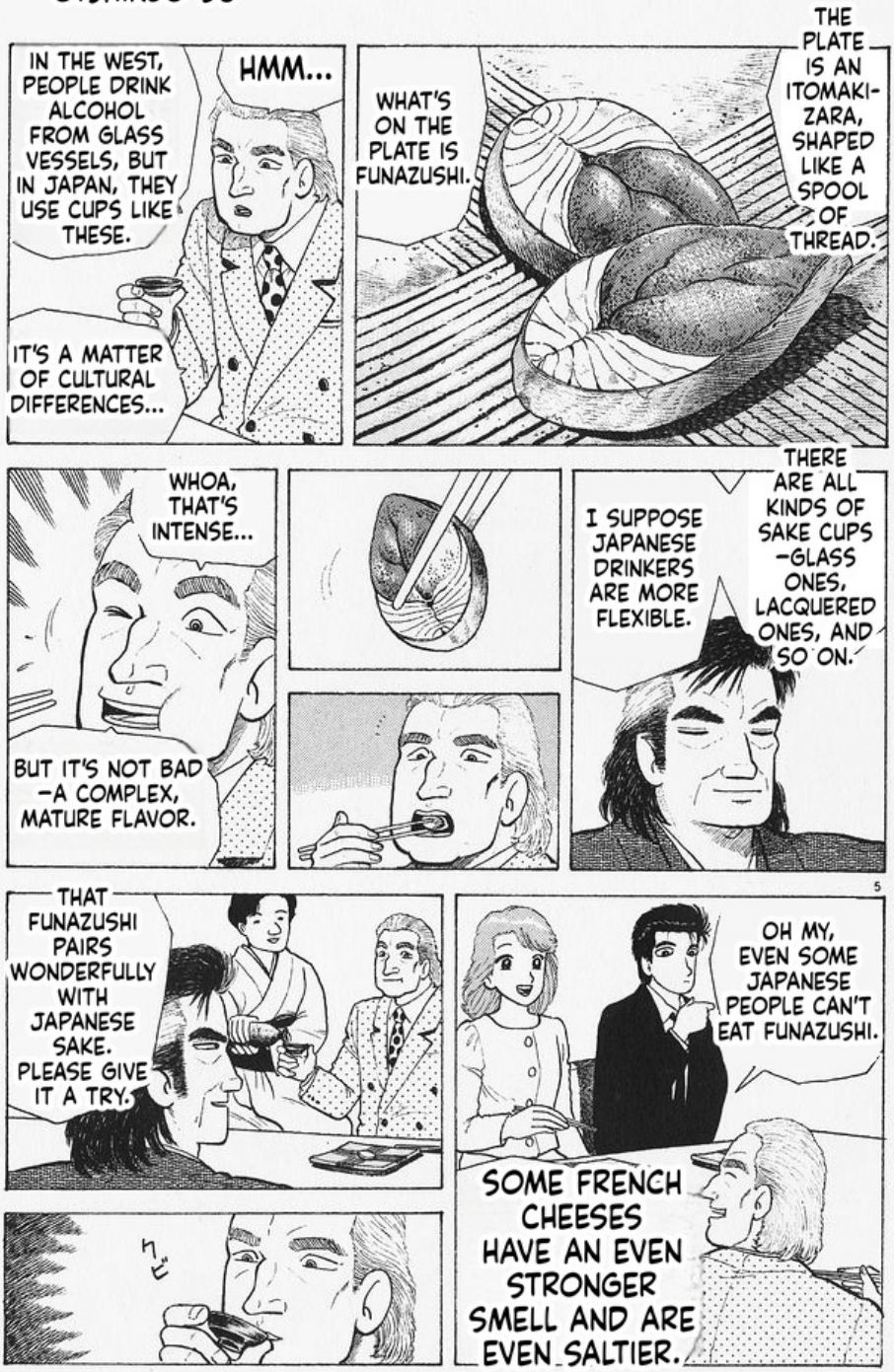
EXACTLY. THESE ARE DISHES MEANT TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND HOW WE JAPANESE FEEL ABOUT RICE.
YOU'RE MAKING ME EAT DISHES SUITED TO YOUR PURPOSE?
IT IS TRUE THAT I CAME TO JAPAN THIS TIME TO URGE THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT TO LIBERALIZE RICE IMPORTS, BUT-
SENATOR, I HAVE NO PETTY INTENTION OF AMBUSHING YOU.
YOU INVITED ME BY SAYING YOU WOULD TREAT ME, THEN USED THE DISHES TO ARGUE JAPAN'S POSITION AND TRY TO DEFEAT ME, IS THAT IT?
THIS ISN'T A FEAST-IT'S AN AMBUSH!
HUH?!
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER KAKUMARU, THIS IS A DIRTY TRICK.
2
YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO TELL WHAT KIND OF PERSON I AM FROM THE WORKS OF MINE DISPLAYED THERE.
IF YOU HAVE AN EYE FOR CERAMICS, SENATOR,


SENATOR, IT'S JUST FOOD. WHETHER IT TASTES GOOD OR BAD—THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT.
I DON'T THINK YOU LACK THE COMPOSURE TO SIMPLY SAVOR IT.
INDEED, SOMEONE WHO WOULD AMBUSH AND DECEIVE OTHERS COULDN'T CREATE A WORK LIKE THIS...
IT WILL SURELY BE A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE...
THANKS TO YOU TWO, IT LOOKS LIKE I'M ABOUT TO HAVE AN UNEXPECTED EXPERIENCE.
WHAT IS HE PLOTTING?
HMM...
3

BEAUTIFUL.
YOU CAN'T JUST ACQUIRE THEM, NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU WANT TO.
A MEAL SERVED ENTIRELY ON MASTER KAIBARA'S VESSELS WOULD BE AN UNIMAGINABLE LUXURY.
DID YOU MAKE THIS ONE, TOO?
OF COURSE. EVERY VESSEL I'M ABOUT TO SERVE IS MY OWN WORK.
AS THE FIREWOOD CONTINUES TO BURN, ASH IS BLOWN ONTO THE SURFACE OF THE VESSELS, THEN MELTS FROM THE HEAT OF THE FLAMES AND BECOMES A NATURAL GLAZE.
THEY ARE PACKED INTO A SPECIAL KILN CALLED A CLIMBING KILN, AND PINE FIREWOOD IS BURNED CONTINUOUSLY FOR AN ENTIRE WEEK.
AFTER THE FIRE IS EXTINGUISHED, THE KILN IS LEFT TO COOL FOR AN ENTIRE WEEK BEFORE IT IS UNLOADED.
THIS IS BIZEN WARE. IT WAS SIMPLY MADE BY KNEADING THE CLAY AND FIRING IT. NO GLAZE OR ANYTHING ELSE WAS USED.
TO THINK SUCH COMPLEX VARIATIONS IN COLOR AND LUSTER CAN BE ACHIEVED ON THE SURFACE WITHOUT USING GLAZE...
4
THAT SAKE CUP HAS A BRUSHED-MARK PATTERN.
OH... CAN MERE CLAY REALLY PRODUCE SUCH CHARACTER...?

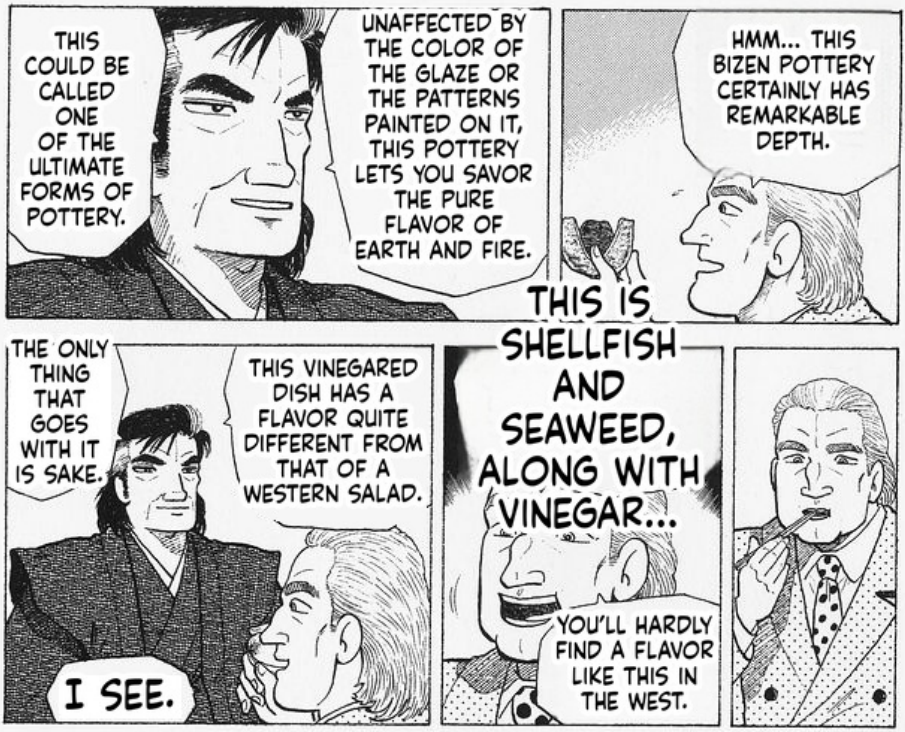

IN THE WEST, PEOPLE DRINK ALCOHOL FROM GLASS VESSELS, BUT IN JAPAN, THEY USE CUPS LIKE THESE.
HMM...
IT'S A MATTER OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES...
WHAT'S ON THE PLATE IS FUNAZUSHI.
THE PLATE IS AN ITOMAKI-ZARA, SHAPED LIKE A SPOOL OF THREAD.
WHOA, THAT'S INTENSE...
BUT IT'S NOT BAD —A COMPLEX, MATURE FLAVOR.
I SUPPOSE JAPANESE DRINKERS ARE MORE FLEXIBLE.
THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF SAKE CUPS —GLASS ONES, LACQUERED ONES, AND SO ON.
5
THAT FUNAZUSHI PAIRS WONDERFULLY WITH JAPANESE SAKE. PLEASE GIVE IT A TRY.
ハビ
OH MY, EVEN SOME JAPANESE PEOPLE CAN'T EAT FUNAZUSHI.
SOME FRENCH CHEESES HAVE AN EVEN STRONGER SMELL AND ARE EVEN SALTIER.

THE AROMA IS REFRESHINGLY CLEAN, AND THE FLAVOR IS RICH!
DRINKING THIS REALLY BRINGS OUT THE FLAVOR OF THE FUNAZUSHI YOU HAD FIRST!
THE SAKE I DRANK AT JAPANESE RESTAURANTS IN NEW YORK AND LOS ANGELES HAD A STRANGE SMELL, AND FRANKLY, I DIDN'T THINK IT WAS VERY GOOD—BUT THIS SAKE IS SOMETHING ELSE!
OH!

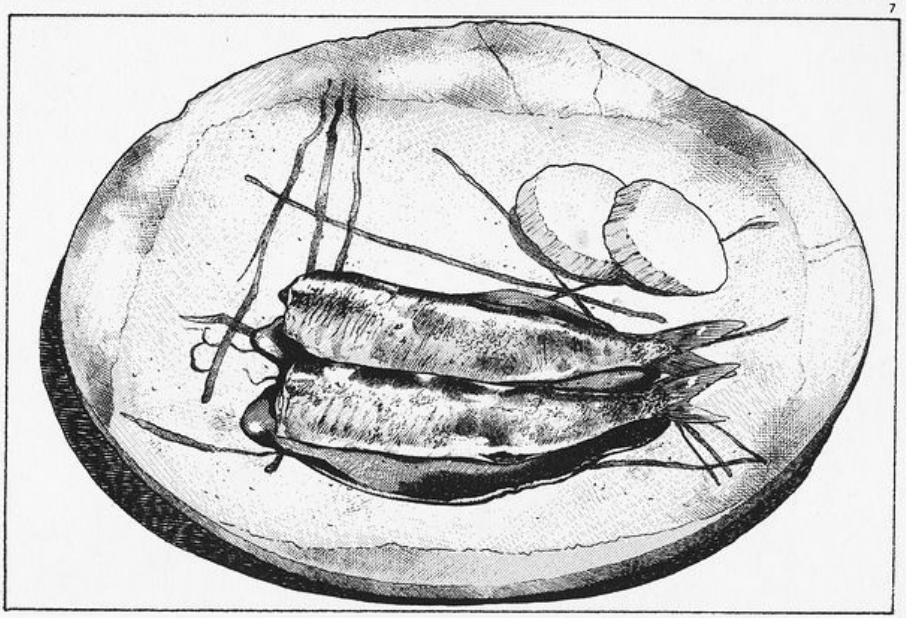
THE SENATOR CERTAINLY HAS A DISCERNING PALATE.
ムスー
WHAT YOU'VE JUST TASTED IS GENUINE JAPANESE SAKE.
IT'S UNFORTUNATE THAT THE AWFUL SAKE PRODUCED BY MAJOR MANUFACTURERS AND EXPORTED OVERSEAS IS GIVING FOREIGNERS A BAD IMPRESSION OF JAPANESE SAKE.

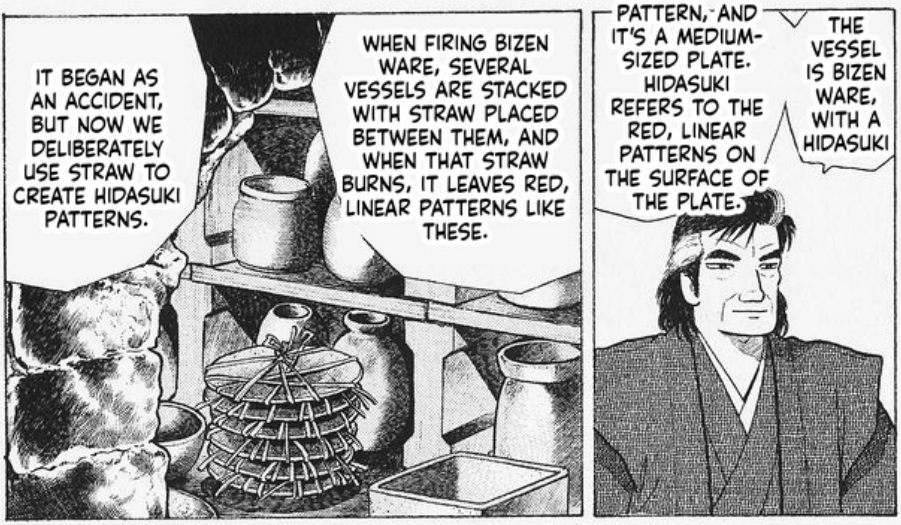
6

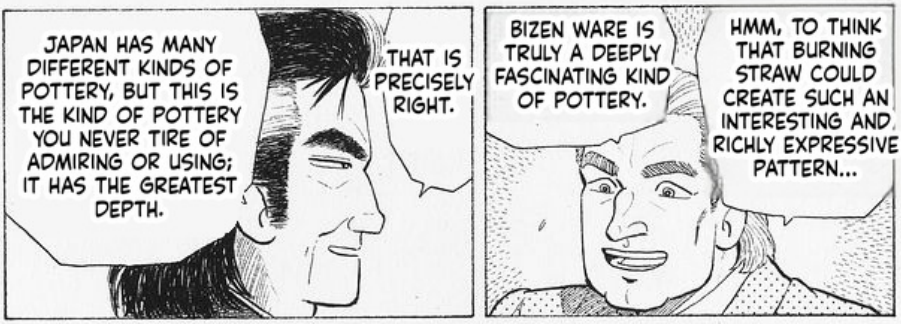
THE VESSEL IS CALLED A BIZEN WARISANSHO, SHAPED LIKE A SPLIT JAPANESE PEPPER BERRY.
VINEGARED WAKAME AND ARK SHELL.


THIS COULD BE CALLED ONE OF THE ULTIMATE FORMS OF POTTERY.
UNAFFECTED BY THE COLOR OF THE GLAZE OR THE PATTERNS PAINTED ON IT, THIS POTTERY LETS YOU SAVOR THE PURE FLAVOR OF EARTH AND FIRE.
HMM... THIS BIZEN POTTERY CERTAINLY HAS REMARKABLE DEPTH.
THE ONLY THING THAT GOES WITH IT IS SAKE.
THIS VINEGARED DISH HAS A FLAVOR QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF A WESTERN SALAD.
I SEE.
THIS IS SHELLFISH AND SEAWEED, ALONG WITH VINEGAR...
YOU'LL HARDLY FIND A FLAVOR LIKE THIS IN THE WEST.

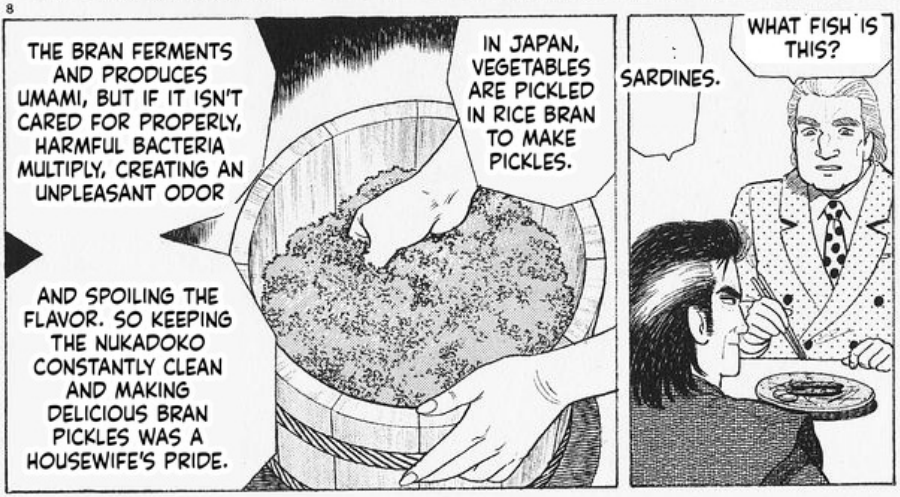
7

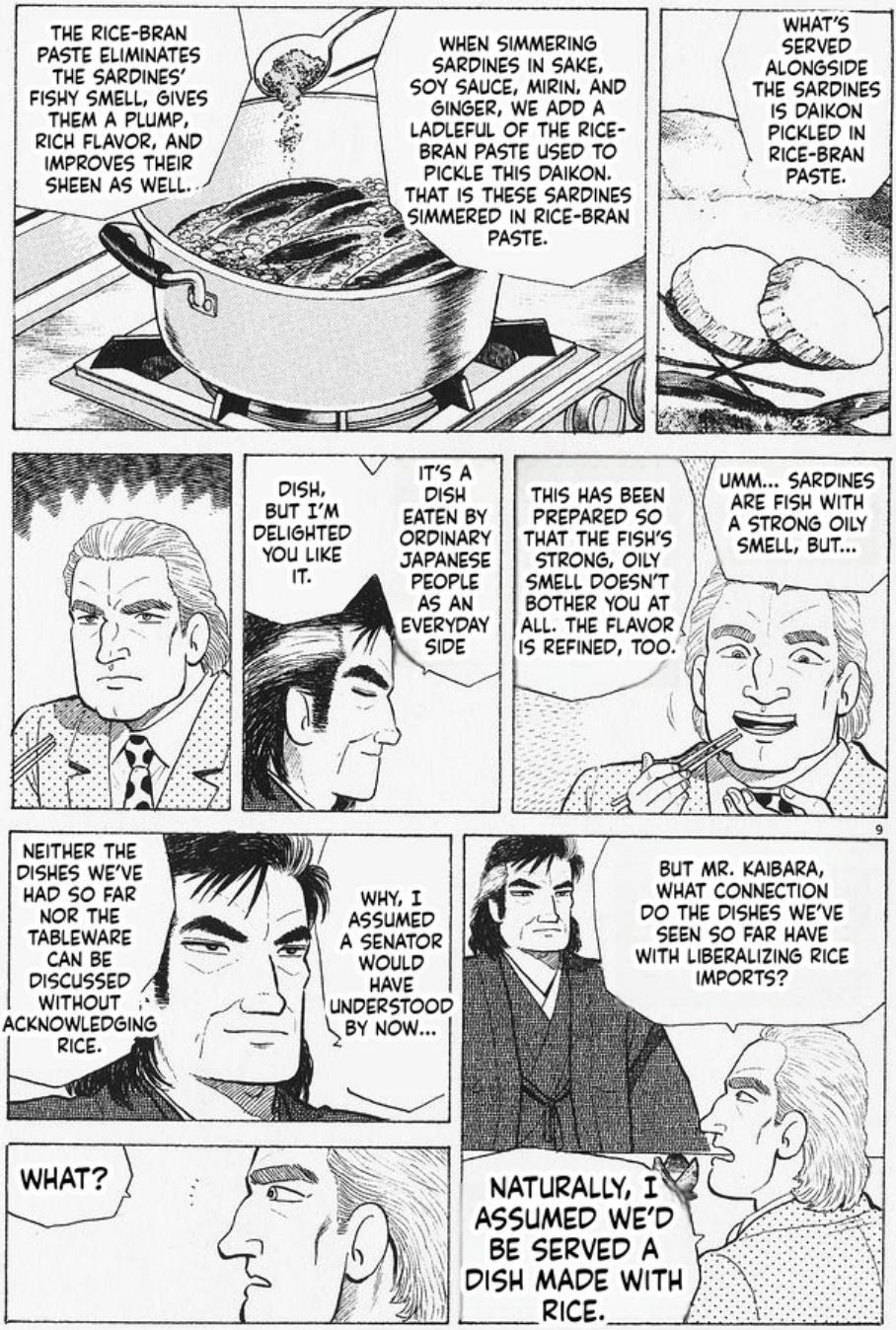



IT BEGAN AS AN ACCIDENT, BUT NOW WE DELIBERATELY USE STRAW TO CREATE HIDASUKI PATTERNS.
WHEN FIRING BIZEN WARE, SEVERAL VESSELS ARE STACKED WITH STRAW PLACED BETWEEN THEM, AND WHEN THAT STRAW BURNS, IT LEAVES RED, LINEAR PATTERNS LIKE THESE.
THE VESSEL IS BIZEN WARE, WITH A HIDASUKI PATTERN, AND IT'S A MEDIUM-SIZED PLATE.
HIDASUKI REFERS TO THE RED, LINEAR PATTERNS ON THE SURFACE OF THE PLATE.


JAPAN HAS MANY DIFFERENT KINDS OF POTTERY, BUT THIS IS THE KIND OF POTTERY YOU NEVER TIRE OF ADMIRING OR USING; IT HAS THE GREATEST DEPTH.
THAT IS PRECISELY RIGHT.
BIZEN WARE IS TRULY A DEEPLY FASCINATING KIND OF POTTERY.
HMM, TO THINK THAT BURNING STRAW COULD CREATE SUCH AN INTERESTING AND RICHLY EXPRESSIVE PATTERN...

8


THE BRAN FERMENTS AND PRODUCES UMAMI, BUT IF IT ISN'T CARED FOR PROPERLY, HARMFUL BACTERIA MULTIPLY, CREATING AN UNPLEASANT ODOR
AND SPOILING THE FLAVOR. SO KEEPING THE NUKADOKO CONSTANTLY CLEAN AND MAKING DELICIOUS BRAN PICKLES WAS A HOUSEWIFE'S PRIDE.
IN JAPAN, VEGETABLES ARE PICKLED IN RICE BRAN TO MAKE PICKLES.
WHAT FISH IS THIS?
SARDINES.


THE RICE-BRAN PASTE ELIMINATES THE SARDINES' FISHY SMELL, GIVES THEM A PLUMP, RICH FLAVOR, AND IMPROVES THEIR SHEEN AS WELL.
WHEN SIMMERING SARDINES IN SAKE, SOY SAUCE, MIRIN, AND GINGER, WE ADD A LADLEFUL OF THE RICE-BRAN PASTE USED TO PICKLE THIS DAIKON. THAT IS THESE SARDINES SIMMERED IN RICE-BRAN PASTE.
WHAT'S SERVED ALONGSIDE THE SARDINES IS DAIKON PICKLED IN RICE-BRAN PASTE.
DISH, BUT I'M DELIGHTED YOU LIKE IT.
IT'S A DISH EATEN BY ORDINARY JAPANESE PEOPLE AS AN EVERYDAY SIDE
THIS HAS BEEN PREPARED SO THAT THE FISH'S STRONG, OILY SMELL DOESN'T BOTHER YOU AT ALL. THE FLAVOR IS REFINED, TOO.
UMM... SARDINES ARE FISH WITH A STRONG OILY SMELL, BUT...
9
NEITHER THE DISHES WE'VE HAD SO FAR NOR THE TABLEWARE CAN BE DISCUSSED WITHOUT ACKNOWLEDGING RICE.
WHY, I ASSUMED A SENATOR WOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD BY NOW...
WHAT?
BUT MR. KAIBARA, WHAT CONNECTION DO THE DISHES WE'VE SEEN SO FAR HAVE WITH LIBERALIZING RICE IMPORTS?
NATURALLY, I ASSUMED WE'D BE SERVED A DISH MADE WITH RICE.

YES, LET'S GIVE IT A TRY.
HM? THIS YOUNG LADY?
PLEASE ALLOW ME TO EXPLAIN IT, SENATOR.
PERHAPS IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR AN AMERICAN SENATOR WHO ISN'T PART OF A RICE-FARMING CULTURE TO UNDERSTAND.
HMM... IT IS TRUE THAT SAKE IS MADE FROM RICE.
I THINK MAKING ALCOHOL FROM RICE IS SOMETHING UNIQUE TO JAPAN, A RICE-FARMING NATION.
FIRST, THE SAKE. WHAT I SERVED TODAY IS JUNMAI SAKE, MADE SOLELY FROM RICE.
10
IS THIS CHEESE-LIKE FLAVOR ALSO OBTAINED THROUGH THE FERMENTATION OF RICE?!
GOOD HEAVENS!
RICE'S FERMENTATION PRESERVES IT AND GIVES THE PRODUCT ITS DISTINCTIVE FLAVOR.
FUNAZUSHI IS MADE BY TAKING CRUCIAN CARP THAT HAS BEEN SALTED, THEN PICKLING IT AGAIN IN RICE,
IT'S A FLAVOR THAT CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE POWER OF RICE.

IN THE WEST, WINE VINEGAR MADE FROM GRAPES AND APPLE CIDER VINEGAR ARE COMMONLY USED, BUT

IT MAY WORK WELL IN VEGETABLE SALADS AND THE LIKE, BUT WITH SEAFOOD, IT BRINGS OUT A FISHY SMELL, SO IT DOESN'T GO WELL.

THE ONLY VINEGAR THAT TASTES GOOD WITH SEAFOOD IS RICE VINEGAR, MADE FROM RICE.

NOW, FOR THE NEXT VINEGARED DISH,

THE VINEGAR USED WAS RICE VINEGAR, MADE FROM RICE.

MMM... I NEVER KNEW THERE COULD BE SUCH A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RICE VINEGAR AND WINE VINEGAR...

RICE IS FIRMLY PRESENT IN THIS DISH AS WELL.

JAPANESE PEOPLE EAT A LOT OF SEAFOOD. RICE VINEGAR IS INDISPENSABLE FOR PREPARING SEAFOOD.

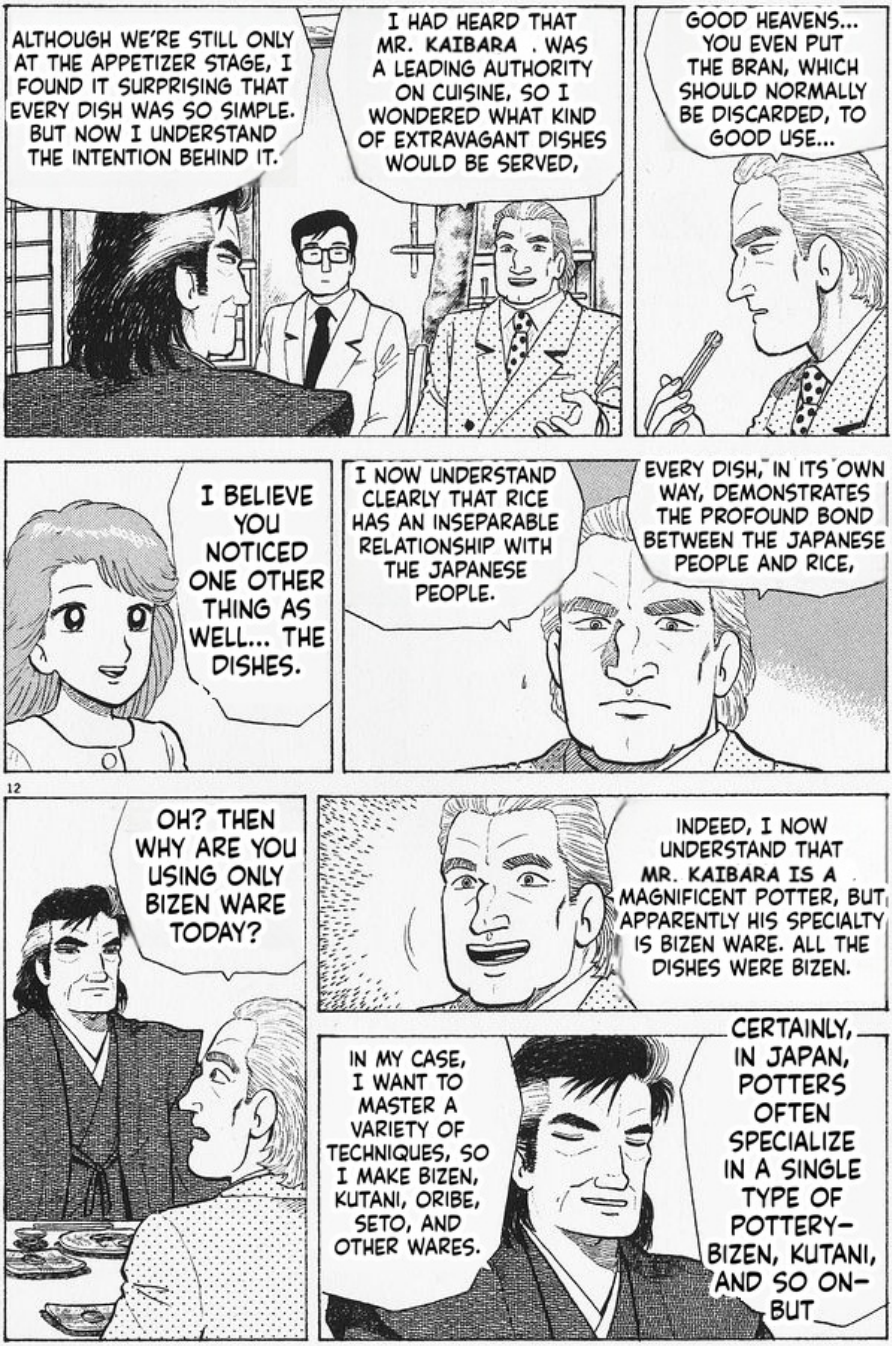
11

NEEDLESS TO SAY, RICE BRAN IS THE OUTER LAYER OF THE RICE GRAIN REMOVED DURING MILLING, AND IT IS RICH IN NUTRIENTS, INCLUDING THE GERM.

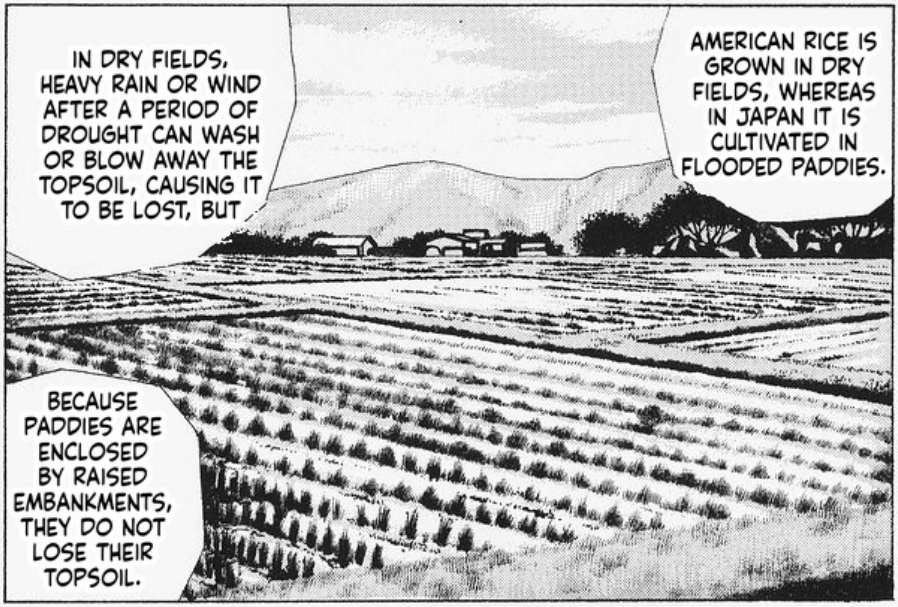
RATHER THAN THROWING AWAY RICE BRAN AS WASTE, THEY USE IT TO PICKLE THE PICKLED VEGETABLES INDISPENSABLE AS A SIDE DISH WITH RICE, AND

PERHAPS THAT IS BECAUSE THE JAPANESE HAVE LONG BEEN DEEPLY CONNECTED WITH RICE.

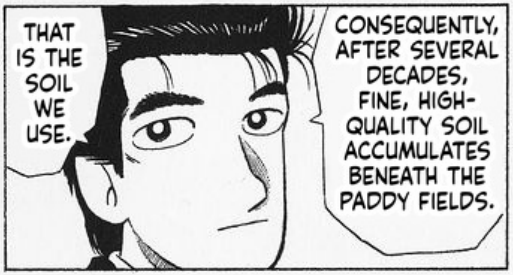
SPEAKING OF SARDINES SIMMERED IN RICE BRAN MISO AND DAIKON PICKLED IN RICE BRAN, THE UNSUNG HERO IS RICE BRAN.


ALTHOUGH WE'RE STILL ONLY AT THE APPETIZER STAGE, I FOUND IT SURPRISING THAT EVERY DISH WAS SO SIMPLE. BUT NOW I UNDERSTAND THE INTENTION BEHIND IT.
I HAD HEARD THAT MR. KAIBARA . WAS A LEADING AUTHORITY ON CUISINE, SO I WONDERED WHAT KIND OF EXTRAVAGANT DISHES WOULD BE SERVED,
GOOD HEAVENS... YOU EVEN PUT THE BRAN, WHICH SHOULD NORMALLY BE DISCARDED, TO GOOD USE...
I BELIEVE YOU NOTICED ONE OTHER THING AS WELL... THE DISHES.
I NOW UNDERSTAND CLEARLY THAT RICE HAS AN INSEPARABLE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE JAPANESE PEOPLE.
EVERY DISH, IN ITS OWN WAY, DEMONSTRATES THE PROFOUND BOND BETWEEN THE JAPANESE PEOPLE AND RICE,
12
OH? THEN WHY ARE YOU USING ONLY BIZEN WARE TODAY?
INDEED, I NOW UNDERSTAND THAT MR. KAIBARA IS A MAGNIFICENT POTTER, BUT APPARENTLY HIS SPECIALTY IS BIZEN WARE. ALL THE DISHES WERE BIZEN.
IN MY CASE, I WANT TO MASTER A VARIETY OF TECHNIQUES, SO I MAKE BIZEN, KUTANI, ORIBE, SETO, AND OTHER WARES.
CERTAINLY, IN JAPAN, POTTERS OFTEN SPECIALIZE IN A SINGLE TYPE OF POTTERY— BIZEN, KUTANI, AND SO ON— BUT

HUH?
SHIRO, DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHY I USED NOTHING BUT BIZEN TODAY?
HMM...
THAT CLAY.
WHY ASK SOMETHING SO OBVIOUS... THE BASICS OF BIZEN ARE CLAY AND FIRE.
WHAT ARE THE BASICS OF BIZEN?
PATHETIC. DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND THE BASICS OF BIZEN?
CLAY?
THE BASICS OF BIZEN?
13
WH...?
MM... IS THAT WHAT THIS IS ABOUT?
RICE PADDIES?
THE FINEST CLAY IS TAKEN FROM BENEATH RICE PADDIES.
BIZEN WARE IS POTTERY MADE WITH NOTHING BUT CLAY AND FIRE, BUT...
EXPLAIN IT TO THE SENATOR.

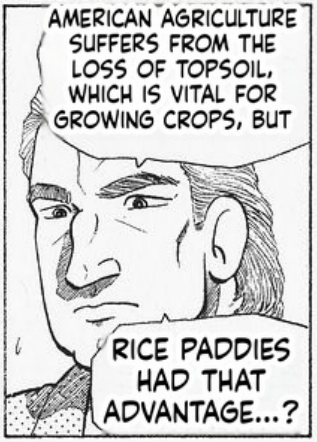

IN DRY FIELDS, HEAVY RAIN OR WIND AFTER A PERIOD OF DROUGHT CAN WASH OR BLOW AWAY THE TOPSOIL, CAUSING IT TO BE LOST, BUT
AMERICAN RICE IS GROWN IN DRY FIELDS, WHEREAS IN JAPAN IT IS CULTIVATED IN FLOODED PADDIES.
BECAUSE PADDIES ARE ENCLOSED BY RAISED EMBANKMENTS, THEY DO NOT LOSE THEIR TOPSOIL.

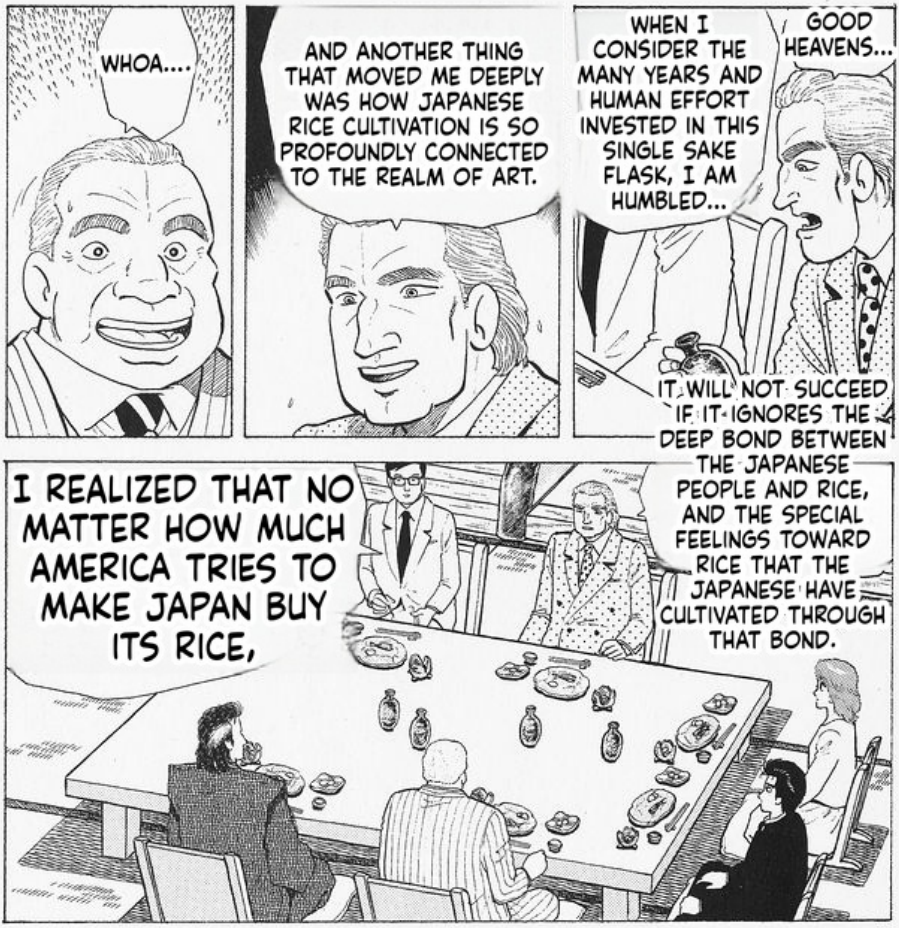
HMM!

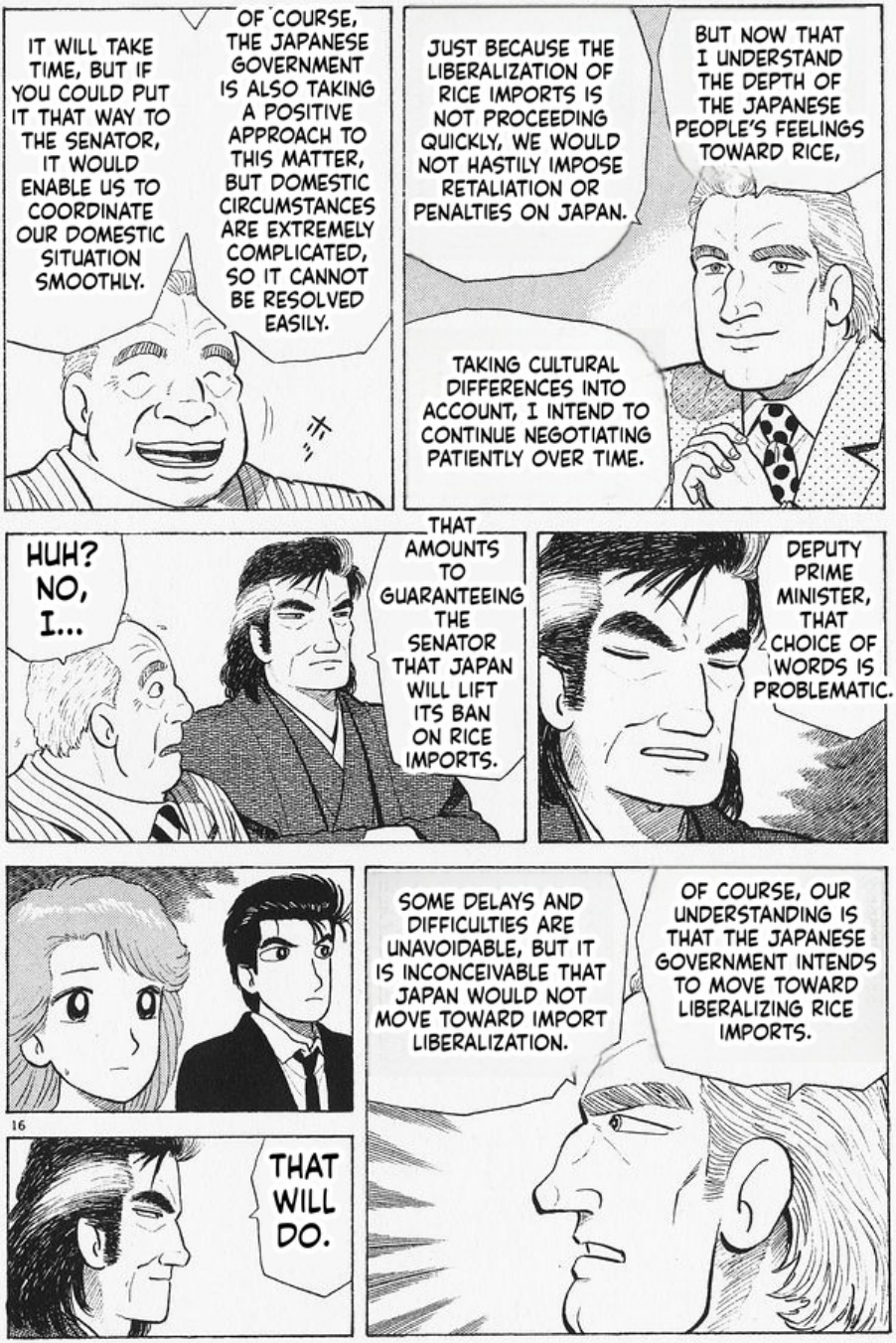

THAT IS THE SOIL WE USE.
CONSEQUENTLY, AFTER SEVERAL DECADES, FINE, HIGH-QUALITY SOIL ACCUMULATES BENEATH THE PADDY FIELDS.

14

AFTER BEING LEFT FALLOW FOR FIVE OR TEN YEARS, IT FINALLY BECOMES USABLE.
EVEN SOIL DUG OUT OF A PADDY CANNOT BE USED IMMEDIATELY.

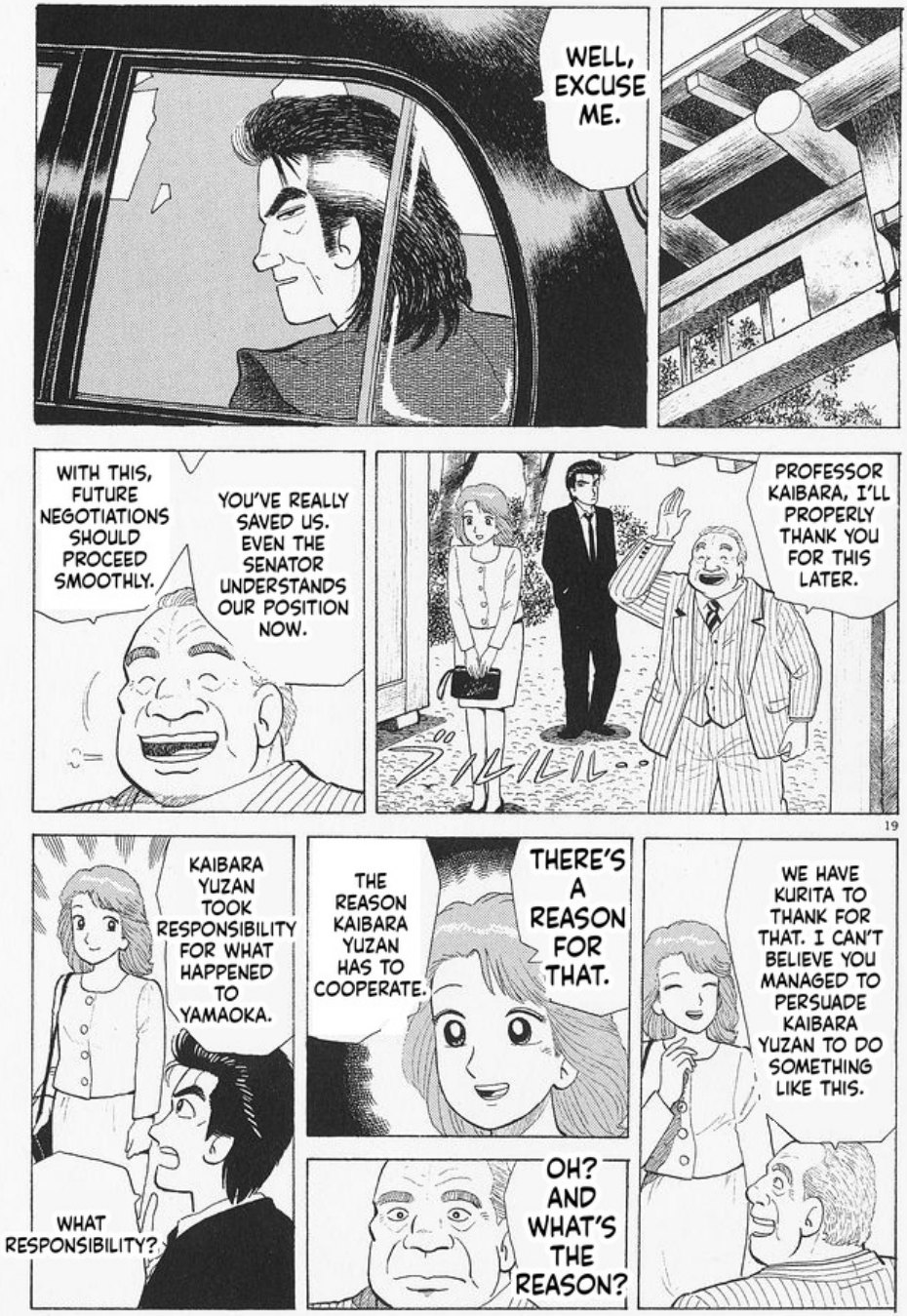

AMERICAN AGRICULTURE SUFFERS FROM THE LOSS OF TOPSOIL, WHICH IS VITAL FOR GROWING CROPS, BUT
RICE PADDIES HAD THAT ADVANTAGE...?

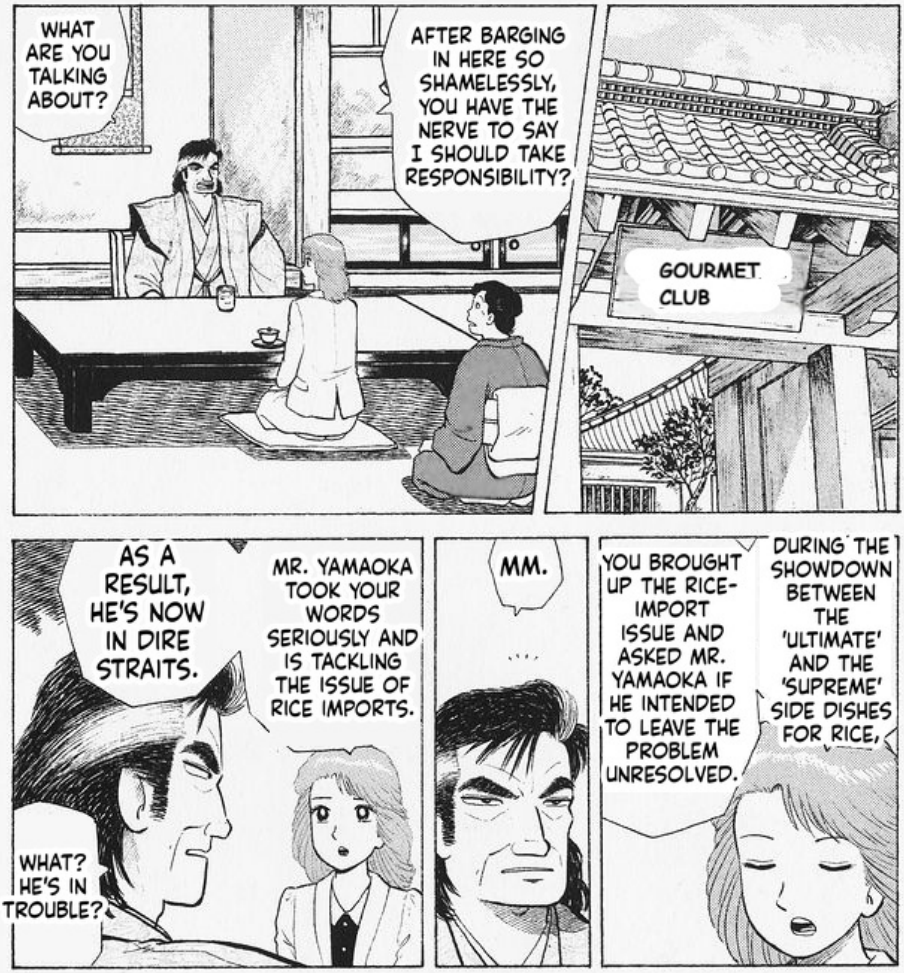

WHOA....
AND ANOTHER THING THAT MOVED ME DEEPLY WAS HOW JAPANESE RICE CULTIVATION IS SO PROFOUNDLY CONNECTED TO THE REALM OF ART.
GOOD HEAVENS...
WHEN I CONSIDER THE MANY YEARS AND HUMAN EFFORT INVESTED IN THIS SINGLE SAKE FLASK, I AM HUMBLED...
IT WILL NOT SUCCEED IF IT IGNORES THE DEEP BOND BETWEEN THE JAPANESE PEOPLE AND RICE, AND THE SPECIAL FEELINGS TOWARD RICE THAT THE JAPANESE HAVE CULTIVATED THROUGH THAT BOND.
I REALIZED THAT NO MATTER HOW MUCH AMERICA TRIES TO MAKE JAPAN BUY ITS RICE,
15
FROM THAT POSITION, I WILL CONTINUE WORKING TO URGE THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT TO LIBERALIZE RICE IMPORTS.
I STILL BELIEVE THAT TRADE LIBERALIZATION IS IMPORTANT FOR WORLD PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT.
HOWEVER,


IT WILL TAKE TIME, BUT IF YOU COULD PUT IT THAT WAY TO THE SENATOR, IT WOULD ENABLE US TO COORDINATE OUR DOMESTIC SITUATION SMOOTHLY.
OF COURSE, THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT IS ALSO TAKING A POSITIVE APPROACH TO THIS MATTER, BUT DOMESTIC CIRCUMSTANCES ARE EXTREMELY COMPLICATED, SO IT CANNOT BE RESOLVED EASILY.
JUST BECAUSE THE LIBERALIZATION OF RICE IMPORTS IS NOT PROCEEDING QUICKLY, WE WOULD NOT HASTILY IMPOSE RETALIATION OR PENALTIES ON JAPAN.
BUT NOW THAT I UNDERSTAND THE DEPTH OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE'S FEELINGS TOWARD RICE,
TAKING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES INTO ACCOUNT, I INTEND TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATING PATIENTLY OVER TIME.
HUH? NO, I...
THAT AMOUNTS TO GUARANTEEING THE SENATOR THAT JAPAN WILL LIFT ITS BAN ON RICE IMPORTS.
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, THAT CHOICE OF WORDS IS PROBLEMATIC.
16
THAT WILL DO.
SOME DELAYS AND DIFFICULTIES ARE UNAVOIDABLE, BUT IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT JAPAN WOULD NOT MOVE TOWARD IMPORT LIBERALIZATION.
OF COURSE, OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO MOVE TOWARD LIBERALIZING RICE IMPORTS.

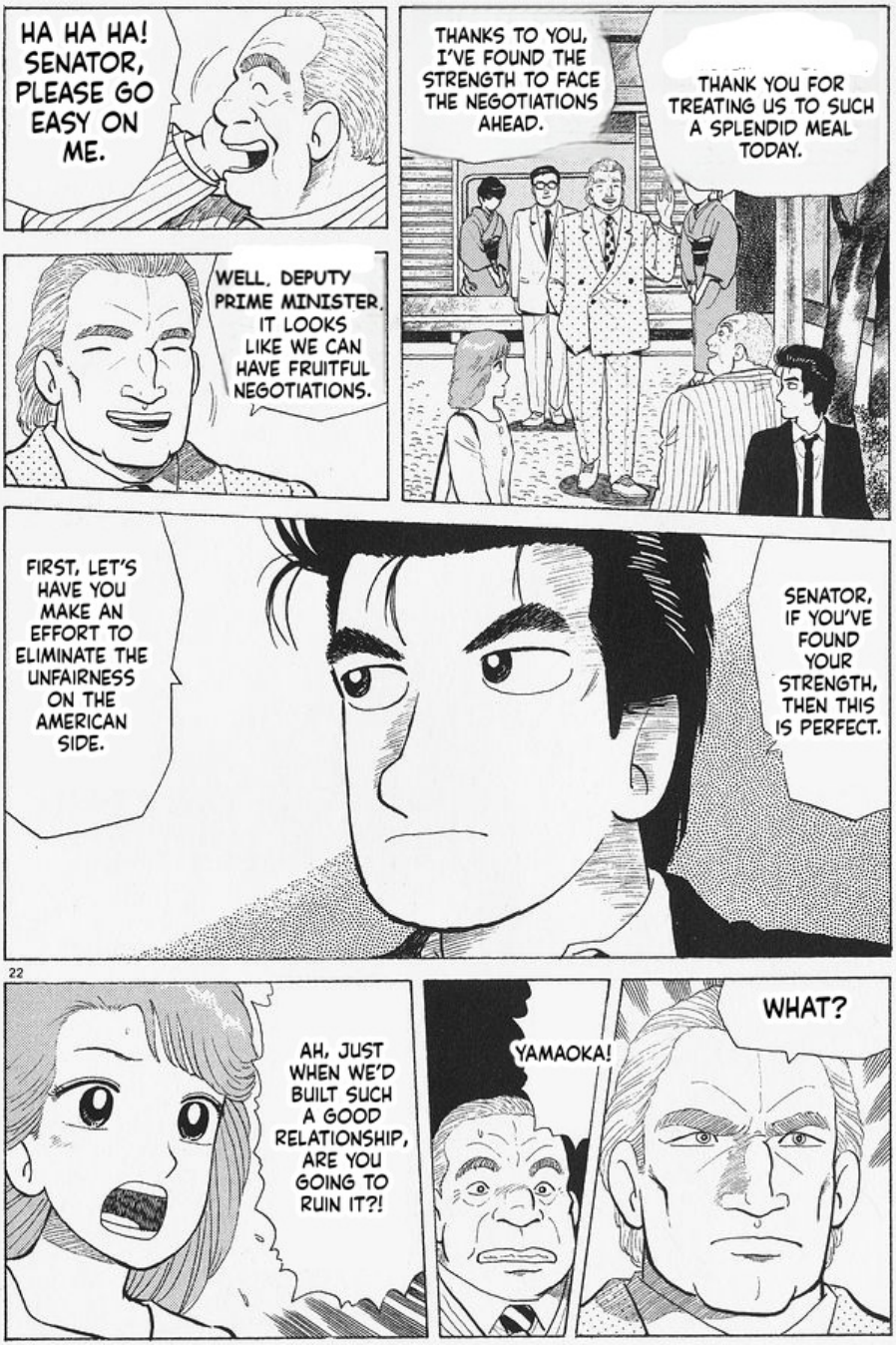
THAT'S WHY THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT, TOO, IS LEANING TOWARD LIBERALIZING RICE IMPORTS IN ORDER TO APPEASE THE UNITED STATES.
UNLESS JAPAN LIBERALIZES RICE IMPORTS, IT WILL BE ACCUSED OF BEING UNFAIR WHENEVER THE ISSUE ARISES, AND RELATIONS BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES WILL BECOME STRAINED.
BUT THAT CAN'T POSSIBLY SOLVE THE PROBLEM.
THE PRACTICAL QUESTION OF HOW MUCH PROFIT AMERICA CAN MAKE IF JAPAN LIBERALIZES RICE IMPORTS IS NOW SECONDARY.
THE LIBERALIZATION OF RICE IMPORTS HAS ALREADY BECOME A POLITICAL ISSUE.
EVEN IF JAPAN LIBERALIZES RICE IMPORTS, DON'T GET YOUR HOPES UP TOO HIGH.
I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THIS TO THE SENATOR.
FROM AMERICA'S PERSPECTIVE, BEEF FROM JAPAN, PRICED OUTRAGEOUSLY HIGH, CONTINUES TO SELL WELL, WHILE IMPORTED BEEF SITS UNSOLD IN INVENTORY, LEAVING DISTRIBUTORS IN TROUBLE.
BEEF CAME IN AT PRICES ONE-FIFTH OR ONE-TENTH THOSE IN JAPAN. AND WHAT HAPPENED AS A RESULT?
.....
MEANING...
17
JUST LOOK AT BEEF. JAPAN LIBERALIZED BEEF IMPORTS.

SENATOR, IF YOU CAREFULLY SAMPLE THE DISHES I'VE PREPARED FOR YOU TODAY, YOU SHOULD REALIZE THAT MY CONCERNS ARE NOT UNFOUNDED.
.....
FOR YOU TO IMAGINE RICE IMPORTED FROM AMERICA GOING UNSOLD AND GROWING OLD IN WAREHOUSES.
I PREDICT THE SAME THING WILL HAPPEN WITH RICE. IT MUST BE A NIGHTMARE
HMMM...
LET'S LEARN A GREAT DEAL WHILE ENJOYING THE MEAL.
WHAT SHOULD AMERICA DO?
OF COURSE, I'LL NOW BE SERVING DISHES PREPARED WITH ALL MY SKILL.
I BELIEVE EVERYTHING WE'VE HAD SO FAR WAS STILL JUST AN APPETIZER.
GOOD HEAVENS, I CAN'T SAY IT'S IMPOSSIBLE...
18
ﾊﾊ
WELL, RATHER THAN THAT, WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER TO SIMPLY ENJOY MY COOKING?


WELL, EXCUSE ME.
PROFESSOR KAIBARA, I'LL PROPERLY THANK YOU FOR THIS LATER.
YOU'VE REALLY SAVED US. EVEN THE SENATOR UNDERSTANDS OUR POSITION NOW.
WITH THIS, FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD PROCEED SMOOTHLY.
19
WE HAVE KURITA TO THANK FOR THAT. I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU MANAGED TO PERSUADE KAIBARA YUZAN TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
THERE'S A REASON FOR THAT.
THE REASON KAIBARA YUZAN HAS TO COOPERATE.
OH? AND WHAT'S THE REASON?
KAIBARA YUZAN TOOK RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO YAMAOKA.
WHAT RESPONSIBILITY?


WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
AFTER BARGING IN HERE SO SHAMELESSLY, YOU HAVE THE NERVE TO SAY I SHOULD TAKE RESPONSIBILITY?
GOURMET CLUB
AS A RESULT, HE'S NOW IN DIRE STRAITS.
MR. YAMAOKA TOOK YOUR WORDS SERIOUSLY AND IS TACKLING THE ISSUE OF RICE IMPORTS.
WHAT? HE'S IN TROUBLE?
MM.
YOU BROUGHT UP THE RICE-IMPORT ISSUE AND ASKED MR. YAMAOKA IF HE INTENDED TO LEAVE THE PROBLEM UNRESOLVED.
DURING THE SHOWDOWN BETWEEN THE 'ULTIMATE' AND THE 'SUPREME' SIDE DISHES FOR RICE,
20
なんとっ…
I THINK YOU SHOULD TAKE RESPONSIBILITY, MR. KAIBARA.
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO EGGED MR. YAMAOKA ON. AND THIS ISN'T MERELY A PERSONAL PROBLEM FOR SHIRO YAMAOKA —IT'S A PROBLEM FOR ALL OF JAPAN.

ONLY YUZAN KAIBARA, WHO POSSESSES ALL OF THOSE QUALITIES, COULD HAVE MOVED THE SENATOR'S HEART.
MAGNIFICENT CERAMIC WORKS, ASTONISHING CULINARY SKILL, AND OVERWHELMING POWERS OF PERSUASION...
I SEE, SO THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED...
I COULD HAVE RESOLVED IT PROPERLY WITHOUT ASKING YUZAN FOR HELP.
TCH! HOW UNPLEASANT.
NO, I WAS JUST...
YUZAN KAIBARA WAS MAGNIFICENT TO HAVE MOVED THE SENATOR'S HEART, BUT KURITA DESERVES CREDIT TOO FOR MOVING KAIBARA!
21
THIS DOESN'T SOLVE ANYTHING.
AMERICA IS UNILATERALLY CALLING JAPAN UNFAIR. YET IT CONTINUES TO TURN A BLIND EYE TO AMERICA'S OWN UNFAIRNESS.
BUT...
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, WHAT ARE YOU SO PLEASED ABOUT? THE SENATOR IS STILL TAKING THE SAME POSITION AND SAYS HE'LL PRESSURE JAPAN TO LIBERALIZE RICE IMPORTS.
COME ON, YAMAOKA, THAT'S NOT FAIR.


HA HA HA! SENATOR, PLEASE GO EASY ON ME.
THANKS TO YOU, I'VE FOUND THE STRENGTH TO FACE THE NEGOTIATIONS AHEAD.
THANK YOU FOR TREATING US TO SUCH A SPLENDID MEAL TODAY.
WELL, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, IT LOOKS LIKE WE CAN HAVE FRUITFUL NEGOTIATIONS.
FIRST, LET'S HAVE YOU MAKE AN EFFORT TO ELIMINATE THE UNFAIRNESS ON THE AMERICAN SIDE.
SENATOR, IF YOU'VE FOUND YOUR STRENGTH, THEN THIS IS PERFECT.
22
AH, JUST WHEN WE'D BUILT SUCH A GOOD RELATIONSHIP, ARE YOU GOING TO RUIN IT?!
YAMAOKA!
WHAT?

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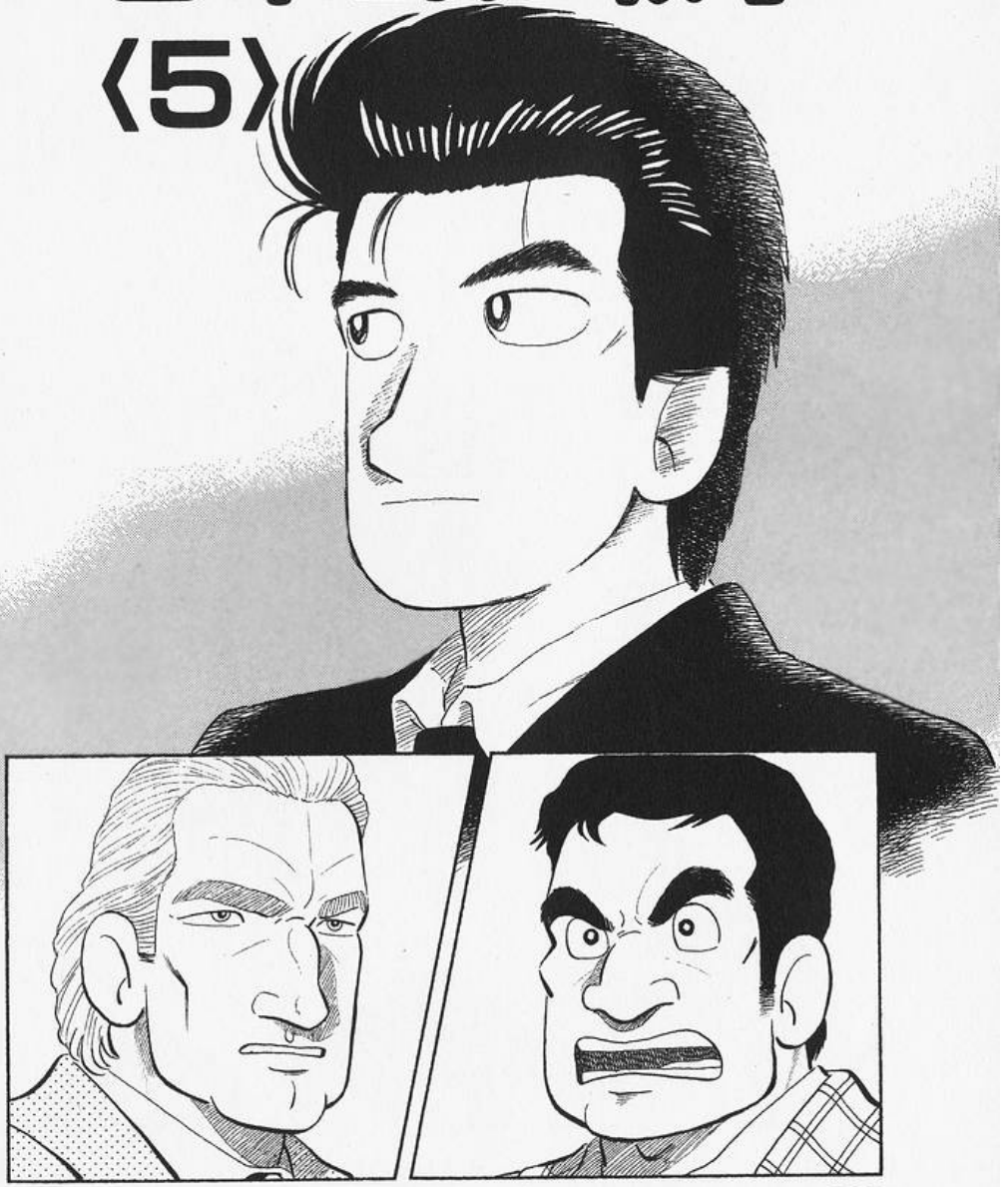
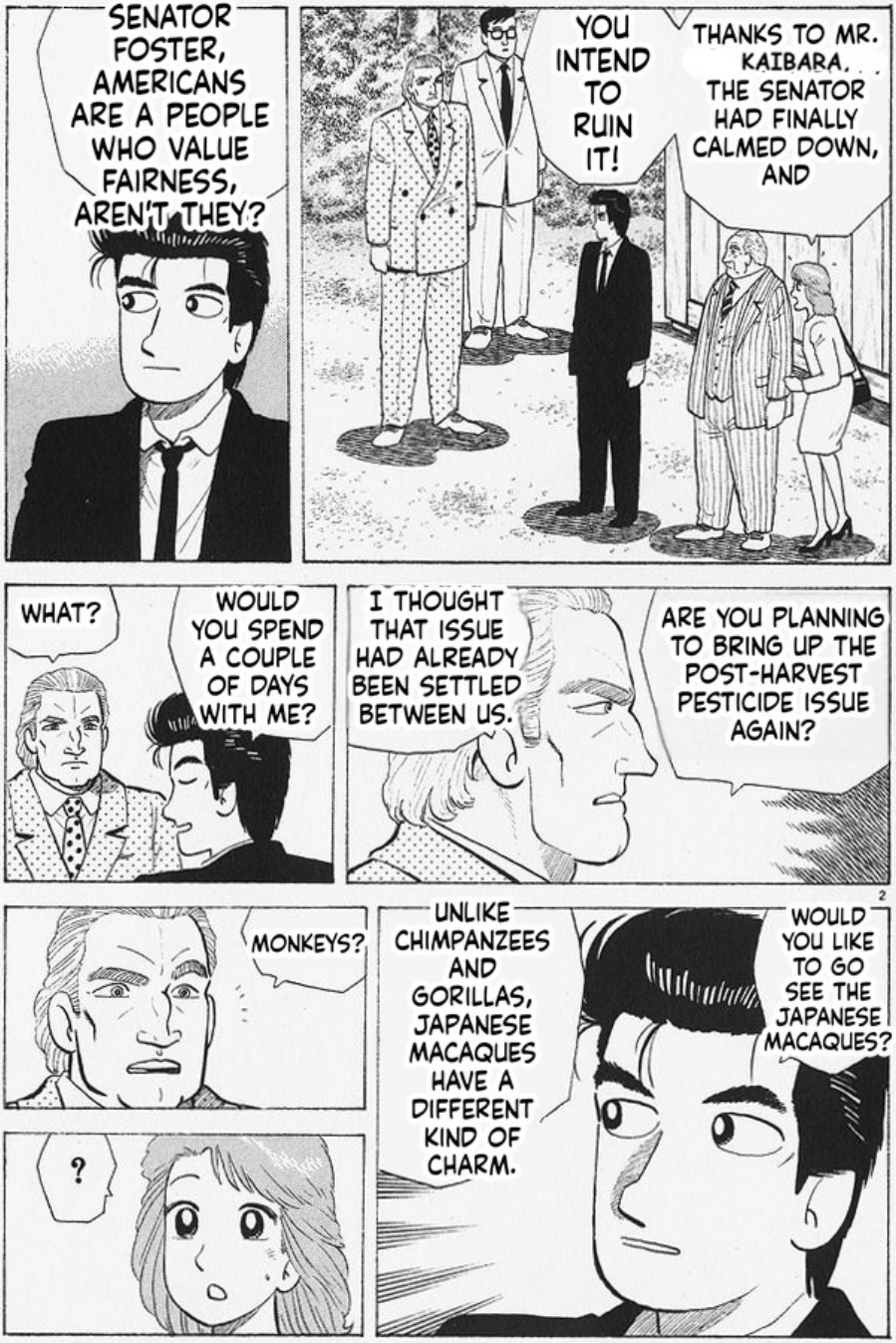
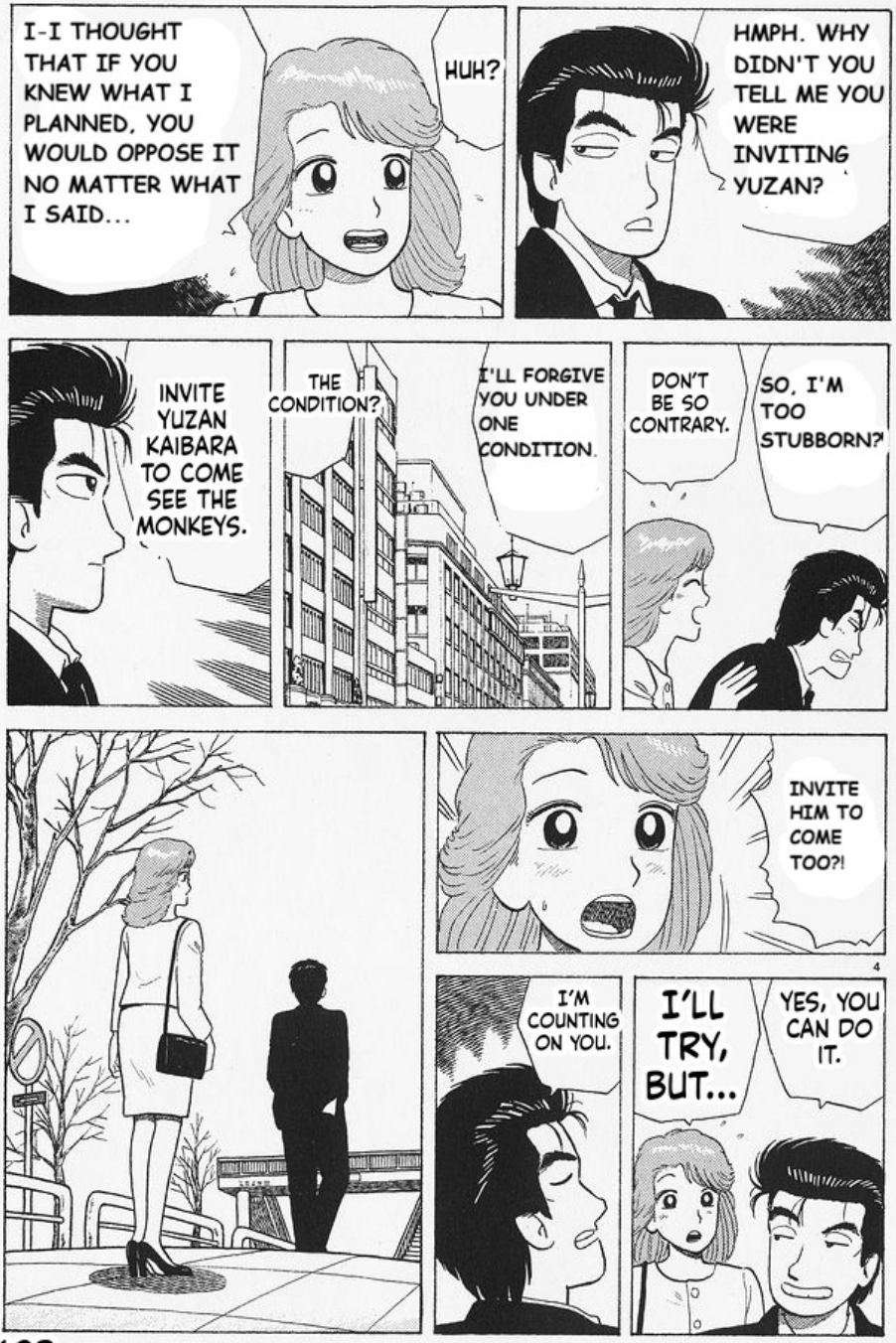
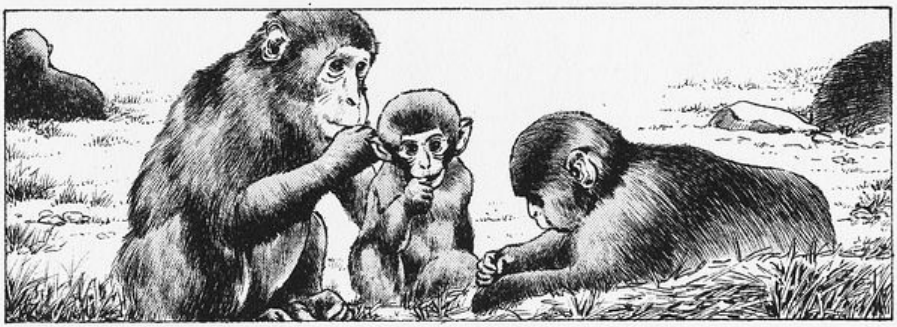
〈5〉




SENATOR FOSTER, AMERICANS ARE A PEOPLE WHO VALUE FAIRNESS, AREN'T THEY?
YOU INTEND TO RUIN IT!
THANKS TO MR. KAIBARA, THE SENATOR HAD FINALLY CALMED DOWN, AND
WHAT?
WOULD YOU SPEND A COUPLE OF DAYS WITH ME?
I THOUGHT THAT ISSUE HAD ALREADY BEEN SETTLED BETWEEN US.
ARE YOU PLANNING TO BRING UP THE POST-HARVEST PESTICIDE ISSUE AGAIN?
MONKEYS?
?
UNLIKE CHIMPANZEES AND GORILLAS, JAPANESE MACAQUES HAVE A DIFFERENT KIND OF CHARM.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO SEE THE JAPANESE MACAQUES?
2

MMM.....
IF THE SENATOR VALUES FAIRNESS AND HAS THE COURAGE TO STAND FIRM, HE SHOULD BE ABLE TO SEE WHAT NEEDS TO BE SEEN.
YAMAOKA, WHAT DO MONKEYS HAVE TO DO WITH RICE?
JUST WHAT YOU'D EXPECT FROM AN AMERICAN SENATOR —YOU'VE GOT REAL GUTS.
VERY WELL. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE PLOTTING, BUT I'LL TAKE THE BAIT.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED, BUT THINGS HAVE CERTAINLY TAKEN A STRANGE TURN...
GOOD GRIEF...
3
WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU MEAN, WE'RE GOING TO SEE MONKEYS?
YOU'LL TELL ME, WON'T YOU?


I-I THOUGHT THAT IF YOU KNEW WHAT I PLANNED, YOU WOULD OPPOSE IT NO MATTER WHAT I SAID...
HUH?
HMPH. WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME YOU WERE INVITING YUZAN?
INVITE YUZAN KAIBARA TO COME SEE THE MONKEYS.
THE CONDITION?
I'LL FORGIVE YOU UNDER ONE CONDITION.
DON'T BE SO CONTRARY.
SO, I'M TOO STUBBORN?
INVITE HIM TO COME TOO?!
I'M COUNTING ON YOU.
I'LL TRY, BUT...
YES, YOU CAN DO IT.



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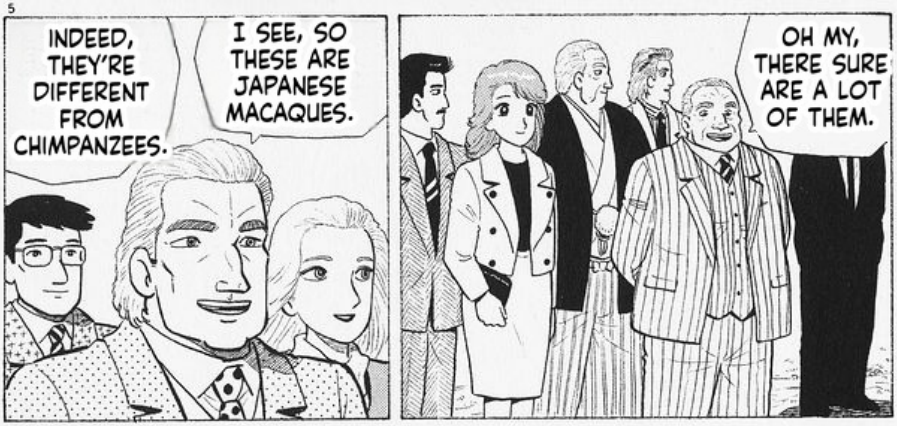
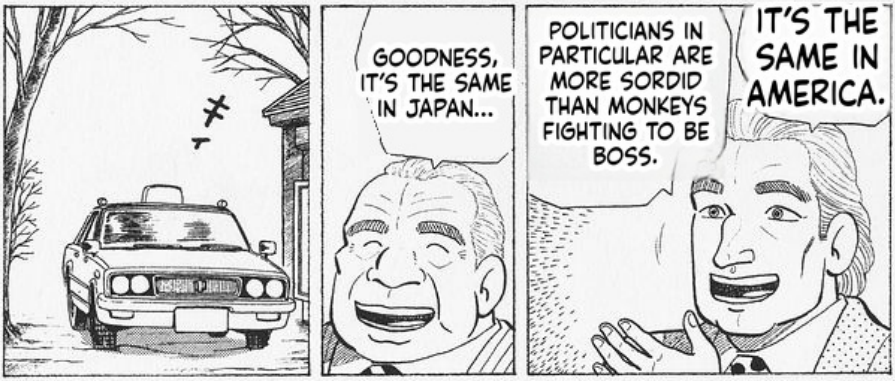

I SEE, SO THESE ARE JAPANESE MACAQUES.
INDEED, THEY'RE DIFFERENT FROM CHIMPANZEES.
OH MY, THERE SURE ARE A LOT OF THEM.

THEY'RE FAR MORE RESPECTABLE THAN ORDINARY PEOPLE.
NO NEED TO THANK ME. IT'S NICE TO SEE A MONKEY NOW AND THEN.
ゴルル…
WE APPRECIATE IT.
THANK YOU FOR COMING ALL THIS WAY.


ブー
GOODNESS, IT'S THE SAME IN JAPAN...
POLITICIANS IN PARTICULAR ARE MORE SORDID THAN MONKEYS FIGHTING TO BE BOSS.
IT'S THE SAME IN AMERICA.

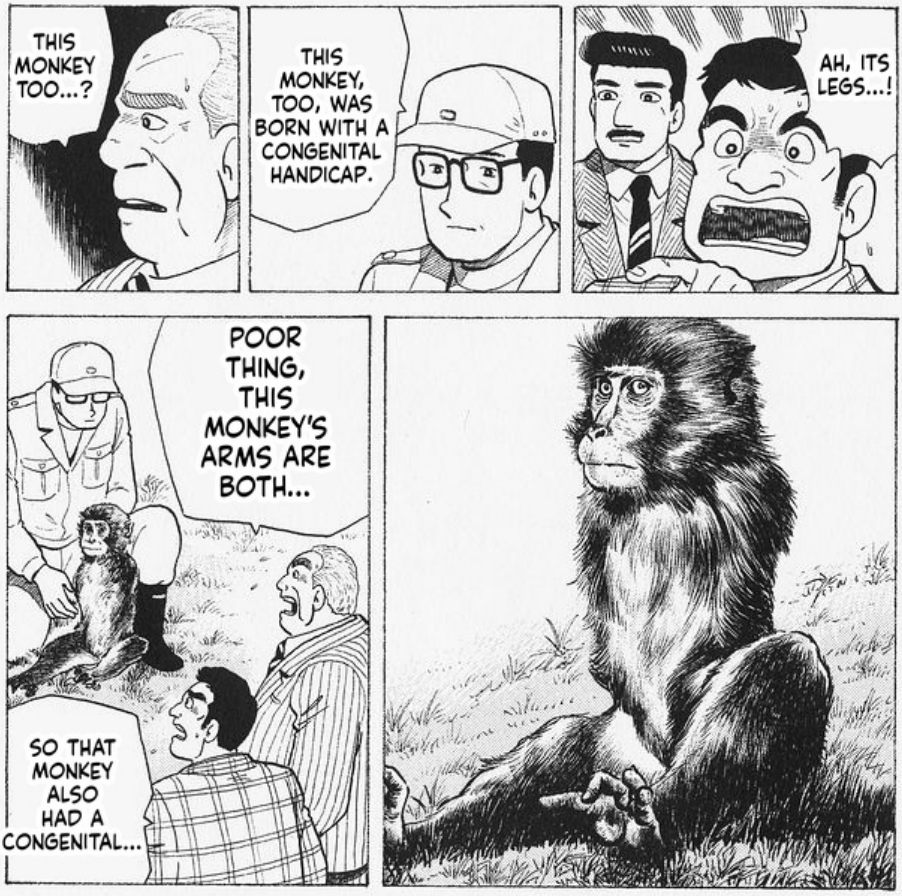
6

HELLO, SENATOR. I'VE SEEN YOU IN THE NEWSPAPERS AND ON TELEVISION.
ブー

HMM. 'THE PARTY OPPOSED TO LIBERALIZING RICE IMPORTS'— THAT'S AN AWFULLY STRAIGHTFORWARD PARTY NAME.
BROTHER, THIS IS THE PERSON—THE ONE I TOLD YOU ABOUT...
I AM YOSUKE TSUCHIDA, LEADER OF THE PARTY OPPOSED TO LIBERALIZING RICE IMPORTS.
I ADMIRE YOUR COURAGE IN STORMING INTO JAPAN, BUT, WELL, YOU'LL BE SOUNDLY DEFEATED.
THE PURCHASER OF ※ IS...
YAMAOKA, YOU DIDN'T GATHER THIS MANY PEOPLE MERELY TO SHOW US MONKEYS, DID YOU?
BEAUTIFUL YAMATO, ISLAND ROOTS, LAND OF RICH RICE— NEVER LET THE ENEMY TREAD UPON OUR ANCESTRAL SOIL!
NOT A SINGLE GRAIN OF FOREIGN RICE SHALL BE ALLOWED INTO JAPAN. RICE FARMING IS JAPAN'S LIFELINE!
WELL, YOU BROUGHT US HERE —IT'S TIME YOU EXPLAINED.
TSUCHIDA, STOP IT!
7
WELCOME, EVERYONE. THANK YOU FOR COMING TODAY.
BEFORE THAT, ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MR. MASAMURA, CARETAKER OF THIS 'MONKEY PARADISE.'

NOW, MASAMURA, PLEASE.
YES, PLEASE COME THIS WAY.
ITS ARM!
8
OH MY! THIS MONKEY!

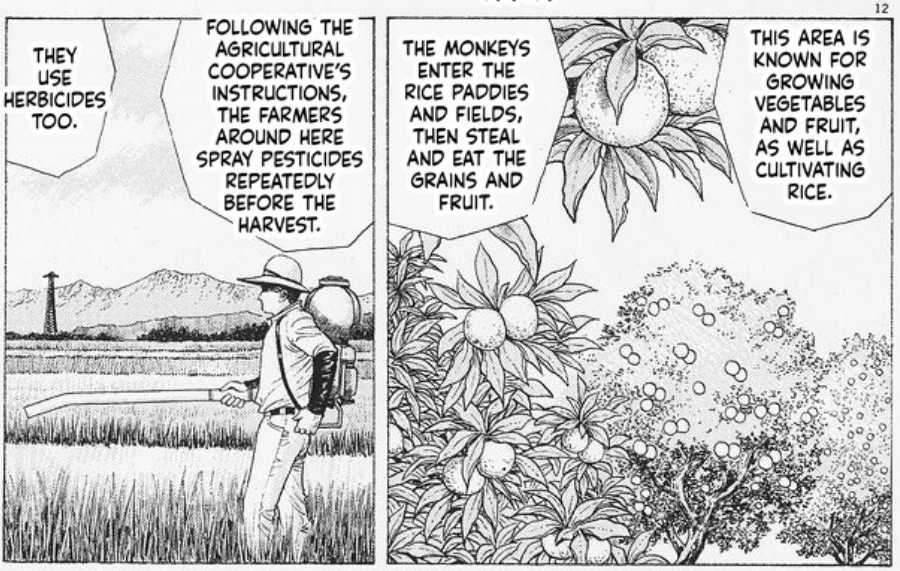
BORN WITH IT...
IT'S A CONGENITAL HANDICAP!
HOW PITIFUL...
ギョッ
9

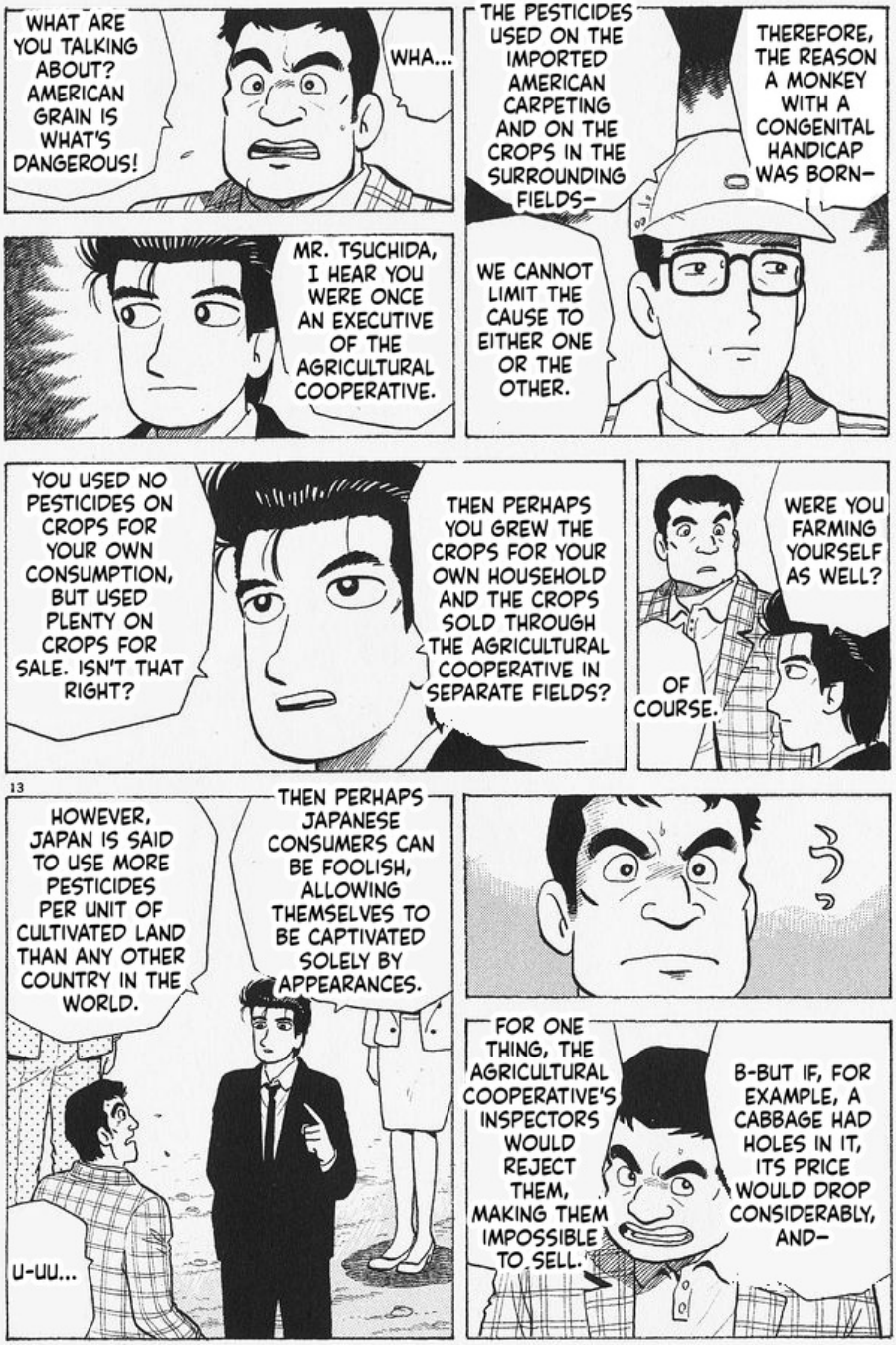

THIS MONKEY TOO...?
THIS MONKEY, TOO, WAS BORN WITH A CONGENITAL HANDICAP.
AH, ITS LEGS...!
POOR THING, THIS MONKEY'S ARMS ARE BOTH...
SO THAT MONKEY ALSO HAD A CONGENITAL...
10
THERE ARE MORE THAN TEN OF THEM HERE ALONE.
INCLUDING THOSE THAT DIED IMMEDIATELY AFTER BIRTH, THE NUMBER IS FAR GREATER.
THERE SURE ARE A LOT OF MONKEYS WITH CONGENITAL HANDICAPS.
HOW TRAGIC...

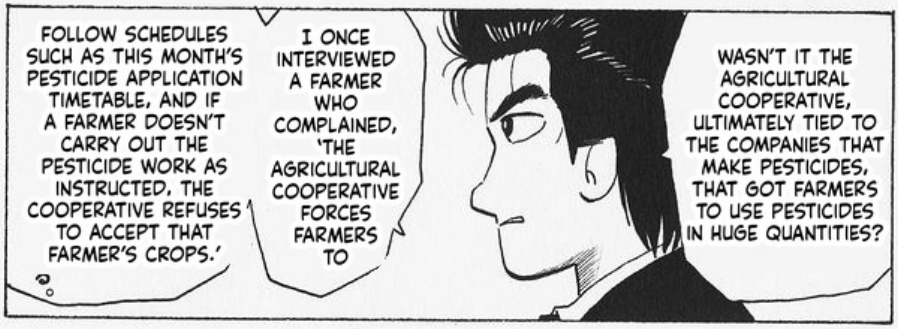
SEVERAL YEARS AGO, MONKEYS BEGAN BEING BORN WITH DISABILITIES, AND THEIR NUMBERS KEPT INCREASING FOR A TIME.
OUR PARK OPENED ABOUT 40 YEARS AGO, BUT MONKEYS WITH SUCH DISABILITIES WERE NEVER BORN IN THE PAST.
WHY?! WHY WERE SO MANY MONKEYS WITH SUCH DISABILITIES BORN HERE?
WHAT!
THEY SAY IT WAS PESTICIDES AND HERBICIDES.
WHAT WAS THE REASON?
THE WHEAT AND CORN WE GAVE THEM TO LURE THEM IN CONTAINED RESIDUAL PESTICIDES.
ALL THE MONKEYS HERE ARE WILD MONKEYS.
THE PREGNANT MOTHER MONKEYS ATE IT, ADVERSELY AFFECTING THE FETUSES IN THEIR WOMBS, CAUSING THEM TO BE BORN WITH DISABILITIES.
WE FED THEM IN ORDER TO TURN THEM INTO A TOURIST ATTRACTION.

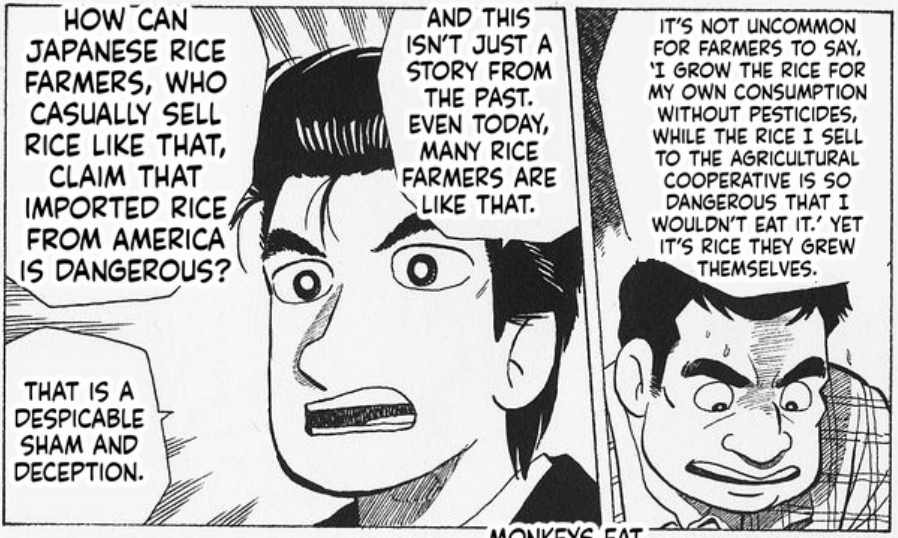
11

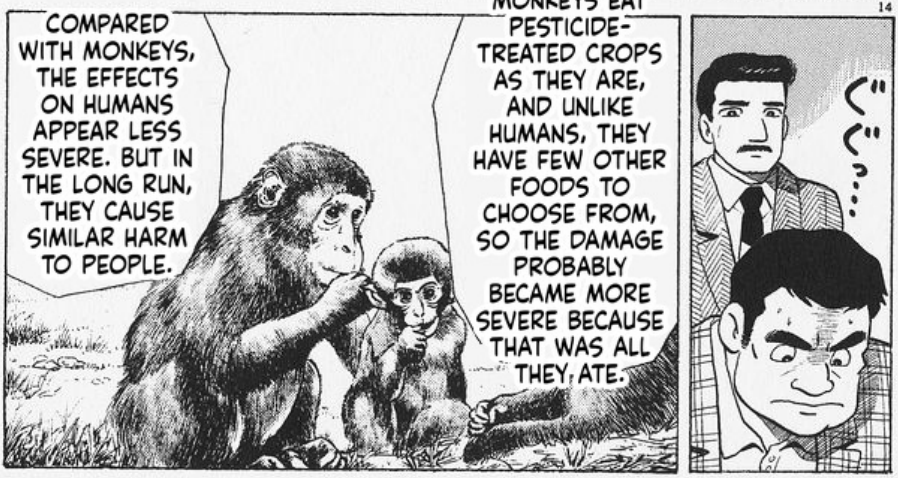
TH-THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
IT WAS AMERICA. THE IMPORTED GRAIN FROM AMERICA HAD PESTICIDE RESIDUES.
WHERE WAS THAT GRAIN HARVESTED?
うう…
IF WHEAT AND CORN HAVE PESTICIDE RESIDUES, THEN THEY'RE BOUND TO BRING US RICE COVERED IN PESTICIDE RESIDUE TOO!
SEE? WHAT DID I TELL YOU!
HOW CAN WE IMPORT RICE LIKE THAT!
NO.
IS THE ONLY FOOD THE MONKEYS EAT THE FOOD INSIDE THE PARK?
12


THEY USE HERBICIDES TOO.
FOLLOWING THE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE'S INSTRUCTIONS, THE FARMERS AROUND HERE SPRAY PESTICIDES REPEATEDLY BEFORE THE HARVEST.
THE MONKEYS ENTER THE RICE PADDIES AND FIELDS, THEN STEAL AND EAT THE GRAINS AND FRUIT.
THIS AREA IS KNOWN FOR GROWING VEGETABLES AND FRUIT, AS WELL AS CULTIVATING RICE.

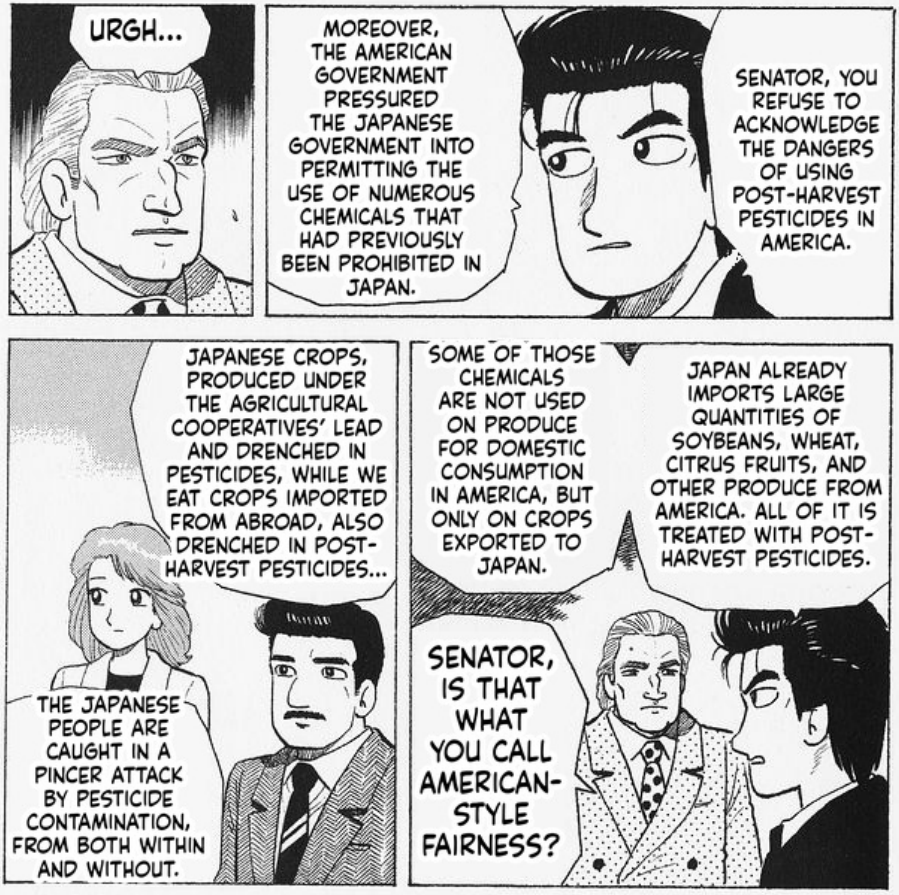

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? AMERICAN GRAIN IS WHAT'S DANGEROUS!
WHA...
MR. TSUCHIDA, I HEAR YOU WERE ONCE AN EXECUTIVE OF THE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE.
THE PESTICIDES USED ON THE IMPORTED AMERICAN CARPETING AND ON THE CROPS IN THE SURROUNDING FIELDS—
WE CANNOT LIMIT THE CAUSE TO EITHER ONE OR THE OTHER.
THEREFORE, THE REASON A MONKEY WITH A CONGENITAL HANDICAP WAS BORN—
YOU USED NO PESTICIDES ON CROPS FOR YOUR OWN CONSUMPTION, BUT USED PLENTY ON CROPS FOR SALE. ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
THEN PERHAPS YOU GREW THE CROPS FOR YOUR OWN HOUSEHOLD AND THE CROPS SOLD THROUGH THE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE IN SEPARATE FIELDS?
WERE YOU FARMING YOURSELF AS WELL?
OF COURSE.
13
HOWEVER, JAPAN IS SAID TO USE MORE PESTICIDES PER UNIT OF CULTIVATED LAND THAN ANY OTHER COUNTRY IN THE WORLD.
THEN PERHAPS JAPANESE CONSUMERS CAN BE FOOLISH, ALLOWING THEMSELVES TO BE CAPTIVATED SOLELY BY APPEARANCES.
U-UU...
う～ん
FOR ONE THING, THE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE'S INSPECTORS WOULD REJECT THEM, MAKING THEM IMPOSSIBLE TO SELL.
B-BUT IF, FOR EXAMPLE, A CABBAGE HAD HOLES IN IT, ITS PRICE WOULD DROP CONSIDERABLY, AND—

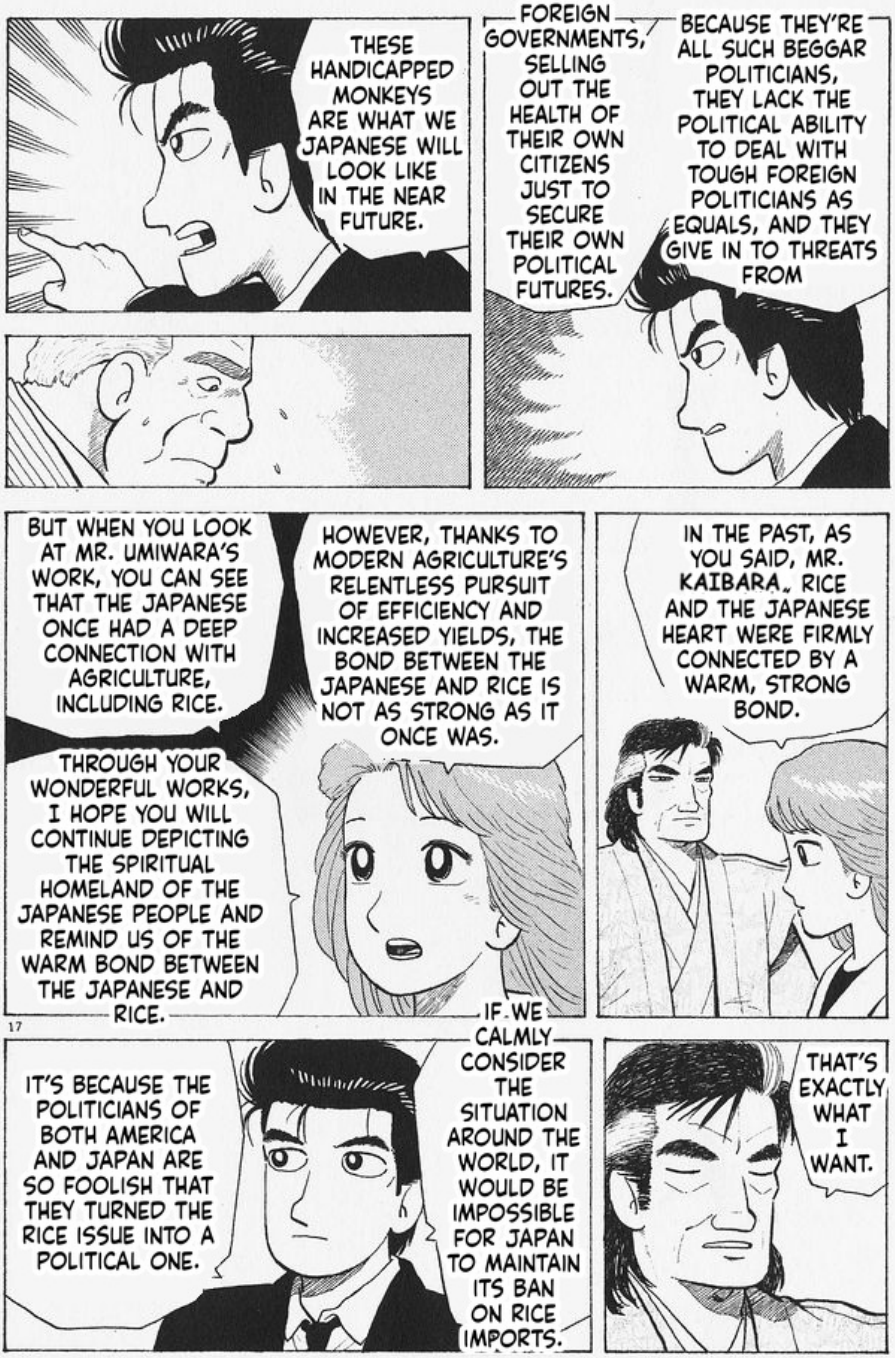

FOLLOW SCHEDULES SUCH AS THIS MONTH'S PESTICIDE APPLICATION TIMETABLE, AND IF A FARMER DOESN'T CARRY OUT THE PESTICIDE WORK AS INSTRUCTED, THE COOPERATIVE REFUSES TO ACCEPT THAT FARMER'S CROPS.'
I ONCE INTERVIEWED A FARMER WHO COMPLAINED, 'THE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE FORCES FARMERS TO
WASN'T IT THE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE, ULTIMATELY TIED TO THE COMPANIES THAT MAKE PESTICIDES, THAT GOT FARMERS TO USE PESTICIDES IN HUGE QUANTITIES?


HOW CAN JAPANESE RICE FARMERS, WHO CASUALLY SELL RICE LIKE THAT, CLAIM THAT IMPORTED RICE FROM AMERICA IS DANGEROUS?
THAT IS A DESPICABLE SHAM AND DECEPTION.
AND THIS ISN'T JUST A STORY FROM THE PAST. EVEN TODAY, MANY RICE FARMERS ARE LIKE THAT.
IT'S NOT UNCOMMON FOR FARMERS TO SAY, 'I GROW THE RICE FOR MY OWN CONSUMPTION WITHOUT PESTICIDES, WHILE THE RICE I SELL TO THE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE IS SO DANGEROUS THAT I WOULDN'T EAT IT.' YET IT'S RICE THEY GREW THEMSELVES.
14

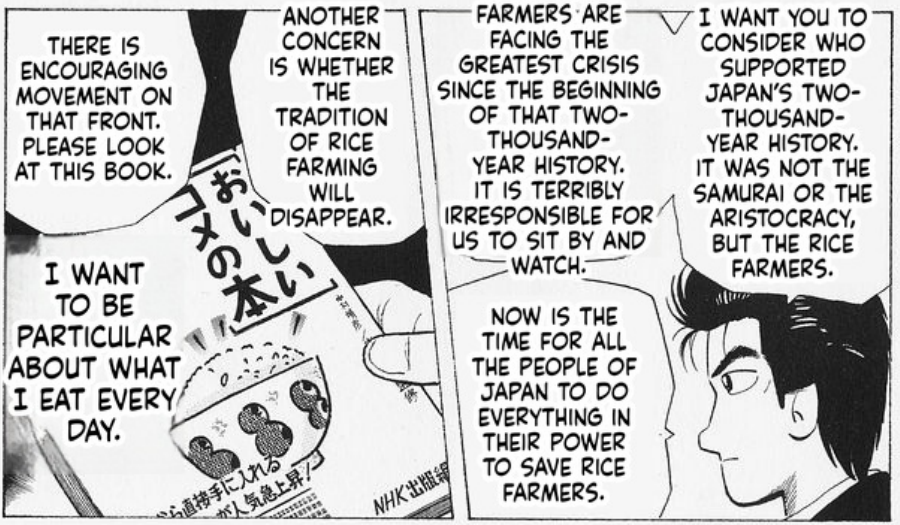

COMPARED WITH MONKEYS, THE EFFECTS ON HUMANS APPEAR LESS SEVERE. BUT IN THE LONG RUN, THEY CAUSE SIMILAR HARM TO PEOPLE.
MONKEYS EAT PESTICIDE-TREATED CROPS AS THEY ARE, AND UNLIKE HUMANS, THEY HAVE FEW OTHER FOODS TO CHOOSE FROM, SO THE DAMAGE PROBABLY BECAME MORE SEVERE BECAUSE THAT WAS ALL THEY ATE.
ごご…

.....
THE HANDICAPPED MONKEYS HERE SHOW US WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HUMANS IF WE CONTINUE FARMING AS WE DO NOW.
BEINGS BENEATH BEASTS, WHO DON'T CARE ABOUT HARMING THEIR FELLOW COUNTRYMEN'S HEALTH FOR MONEY.
IF THIS RICE PRODUCTION, WHICH GIVES BIRTH TO HANDICAPPED MONKEYS AND COULD ULTIMATELY INFLICT THE SAME HARM ON HUMANS, TRULY HAS DEEP TIES TO THE JAPANESE HEART, THEN WHAT EXACTLY ARE THE JAPANESE?
WHAT THE HELL DO YOU MEAN, ART?!
DAY, YOU SAID THAT THE JAPANESE AND RICE HAVE DEEP TIES, AND THAT RICE IS DEEPLY CONNECTED EVEN TO THE FIELD OF ART.
WHILE SHOWING THE SENATOR THAT BIZEN WARE THE OTHER
15
NO, WAIT!
OR ARE YOU SAYING IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR THE PEOPLE TO EAT DANGEROUS RICE AND PERISH?!
YOU SAID RICE FARMING IS JAPAN'S LIFELINE. BUT IF THIS IS WHAT RICE FARMING IS, IT WOULD BE BETTER OFF DEAD!
URGH...


URGH...
MOREOVER, THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT PRESSURED THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT INTO PERMITTING THE USE OF NUMEROUS CHEMICALS THAT HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN PROHIBITED IN JAPAN.
SENATOR, YOU REFUSE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE DANGERS OF USING POST-HARVEST PESTICIDES IN AMERICA.
JAPANESE CROPS, PRODUCED UNDER THE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES' LEAD AND DRENCHED IN PESTICIDES, WHILE WE EAT CROPS IMPORTED FROM ABROAD, ALSO DRENCHED IN POST-HARVEST PESTICIDES...
THE JAPANESE PEOPLE ARE CAUGHT IN A PINCER ATTACK BY PESTICIDE CONTAMINATION, FROM BOTH WITHIN AND WITHOUT.
SOME OF THOSE CHEMICALS ARE NOT USED ON PRODUCE FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION IN AMERICA, BUT ONLY ON CROPS EXPORTED TO JAPAN.
JAPAN ALREADY IMPORTS LARGE QUANTITIES OF SOYBEANS, WHEAT, CITRUS FRUITS, AND OTHER PRODUCE FROM AMERICA. ALL OF IT IS TREATED WITH POST-HARVEST PESTICIDES.
SENATOR, IS THAT WHAT YOU CALL AMERICAN-STYLE FAIRNESS?
THEY WON'T STAND UP TO THE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES BECAUSE THEY WANT THE COOPERATIVES' ORGANIZED VOTES AT ELECTION TIME.
THEY GO EASY ON DOMESTIC PESTICIDE REGULATIONS BECAUSE THEY RECEIVE POLITICAL DONATIONS FROM PESTICIDE MANUFACTURERS.
民主自由党
MOST OF THE RESPONSIBILITY LIES WITH THE MINJITO GOVERNMENT.
16
UGH.


THESE HANDICAPPED MONKEYS ARE WHAT WE JAPANESE WILL LOOK LIKE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.
FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS, SELLING OUT THE HEALTH OF THEIR OWN CITIZENS JUST TO SECURE THEIR OWN POLITICAL FUTURES.
BECAUSE THEY'RE ALL SUCH BEGGAR POLITICIANS, THEY LACK THE POLITICAL ABILITY TO DEAL WITH TOUGH FOREIGN POLITICIANS AS EQUALS, AND THEY GIVE IN TO THREATS FROM
BUT WHEN YOU LOOK AT MR. UMIWARA'S WORK, YOU CAN SEE THAT THE JAPANESE ONCE HAD A DEEP CONNECTION WITH AGRICULTURE, INCLUDING RICE.
THROUGH YOUR WONDERFUL WORKS, I HOPE YOU WILL CONTINUE DEPICTING THE SPIRITUAL HOMELAND OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE AND REMIND US OF THE WARM BOND BETWEEN THE JAPANESE AND RICE.
HOWEVER, THANKS TO MODERN AGRICULTURE'S RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF EFFICIENCY AND INCREASED YIELDS, THE BOND BETWEEN THE JAPANESE AND RICE IS NOT AS STRONG AS IT ONCE WAS.
IN THE PAST, AS YOU SAID, MR. KAIBARA, RICE AND THE JAPANESE HEART WERE FIRMLY CONNECTED BY A WARM, STRONG BOND.
17
IT'S BECAUSE THE POLITICIANS OF BOTH AMERICA AND JAPAN ARE SO FOOLISH THAT THEY TURNED THE RICE ISSUE INTO A POLITICAL ONE.
IF WE CALMLY CONSIDER THE SITUATION AROUND THE WORLD, IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR JAPAN TO MAINTAIN ITS BAN ON RICE IMPORTS.
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WANT.

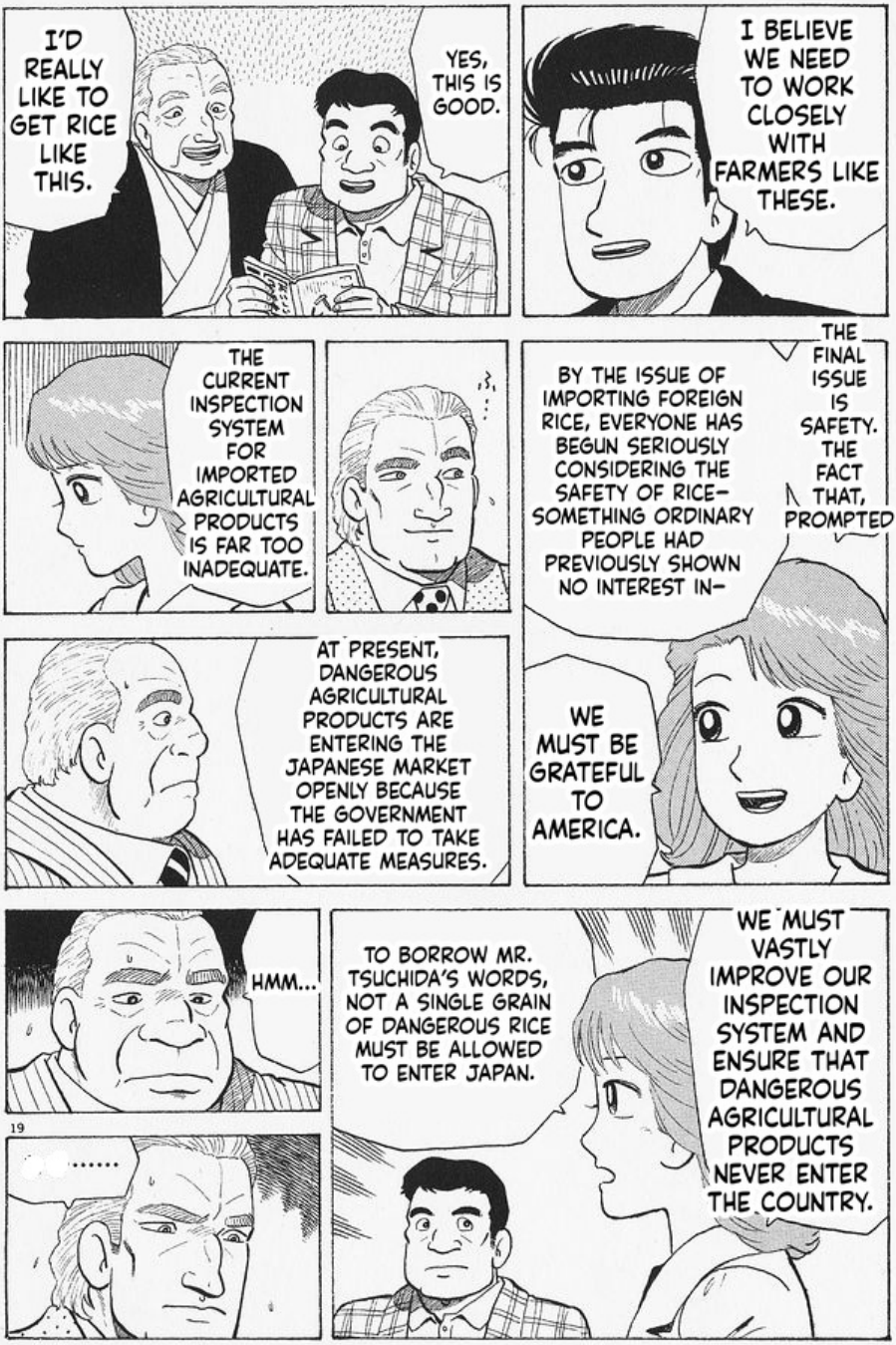
FARMERS PRODUCING EXCELLENT BRANDS SUCH AS KOSHIHIKARI AND SASANISHIKI CAN SURVIVE, BUT FARMERS IN REGIONS THAT CAN PRODUCE ONLY AVERAGE-GRADE RICE OR WORSE MAY FACE DEVASTATION.
WHEN RICE IMPORTS ARE LIBERALIZED, THE FOLLOWING ISSUES WILL ARISE. FIRST OF ALL, HOW CAN WE SAVE THE RICE FARMERS?


THERE IS ENCOURAGING MOVEMENT ON THAT FRONT. PLEASE LOOK AT THIS BOOK.
ANOTHER CONCERN IS WHETHER THE TRADITION OF RICE FARMING WILL DISAPPEAR.
「おいしいコメの本」
I WANT TO BE PARTICULAR ABOUT WHAT I EAT EVERY DAY.
NHK出版
THOSE RICE FARMERS ARE FACING THE GREATEST CRISIS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THAT TWO-THOUSAND-YEAR HISTORY. IT IS TERRIBLY IRRESPONSIBLE FOR US TO SIT BY AND WATCH.
NOW IS THE TIME FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN TO DO EVERYTHING IN THEIR POWER TO SAVE RICE FARMERS.
I WANT YOU TO CONSIDER WHO SUPPORTED JAPAN'S TWO-THOUSAND-YEAR HISTORY. IT WAS NOT THE SAMURAI OR THE ARISTOCRACY, BUT THE RICE FARMERS.

18

AS FARMERS LIKE THESE CONTINUE TO EXIST, IT IS REASSURING TO KNOW THAT JAPAN'S RICE-FARMING TRADITION WILL NOT DISAPPEAR.
THIS KIND OF FARMING IS ONE WAY FOR RICE FARMERS TO SURVIVE AFTER RICE IMPORTS ARE LIBERALIZED, AND AS LONG

THE RICE FARMERS INTRODUCED IN THIS BOOK ARE PEOPLE WHO EARNESTLY STRIVE TO PRODUCE SAFE, DELICIOUS RICE.
THIS IS A NEW MOVEMENT.


I'D REALLY LIKE TO GET RICE LIKE THIS.
YES, THIS IS GOOD.
I BELIEVE WE NEED TO WORK CLOSELY WITH FARMERS LIKE THESE.
THE CURRENT INSPECTION SYSTEM FOR IMPORTED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IS FAR TOO INADEQUATE.
BY THE ISSUE OF IMPORTING FOREIGN RICE, EVERYONE HAS BEGUN SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING THE SAFETY OF RICE— SOMETHING ORDINARY PEOPLE HAD PREVIOUSLY SHOWN NO INTEREST IN—
THE FINAL ISSUE IS SAFETY. THE FACT THAT, PROMPTED
AT PRESENT, DANGEROUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS ARE ENTERING THE JAPANESE MARKET OPENLY BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT HAS FAILED TO TAKE ADEQUATE MEASURES.
WE MUST BE GRATEFUL TO AMERICA.
HMM...
TO BORROW MR. TSUCHIDA'S WORDS, NOT A SINGLE GRAIN OF DANGEROUS RICE MUST BE ALLOWED TO ENTER JAPAN.
WE MUST VASTLY IMPROVE OUR INSPECTION SYSTEM AND ENSURE THAT DANGEROUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS NEVER ENTER THE COUNTRY.
19
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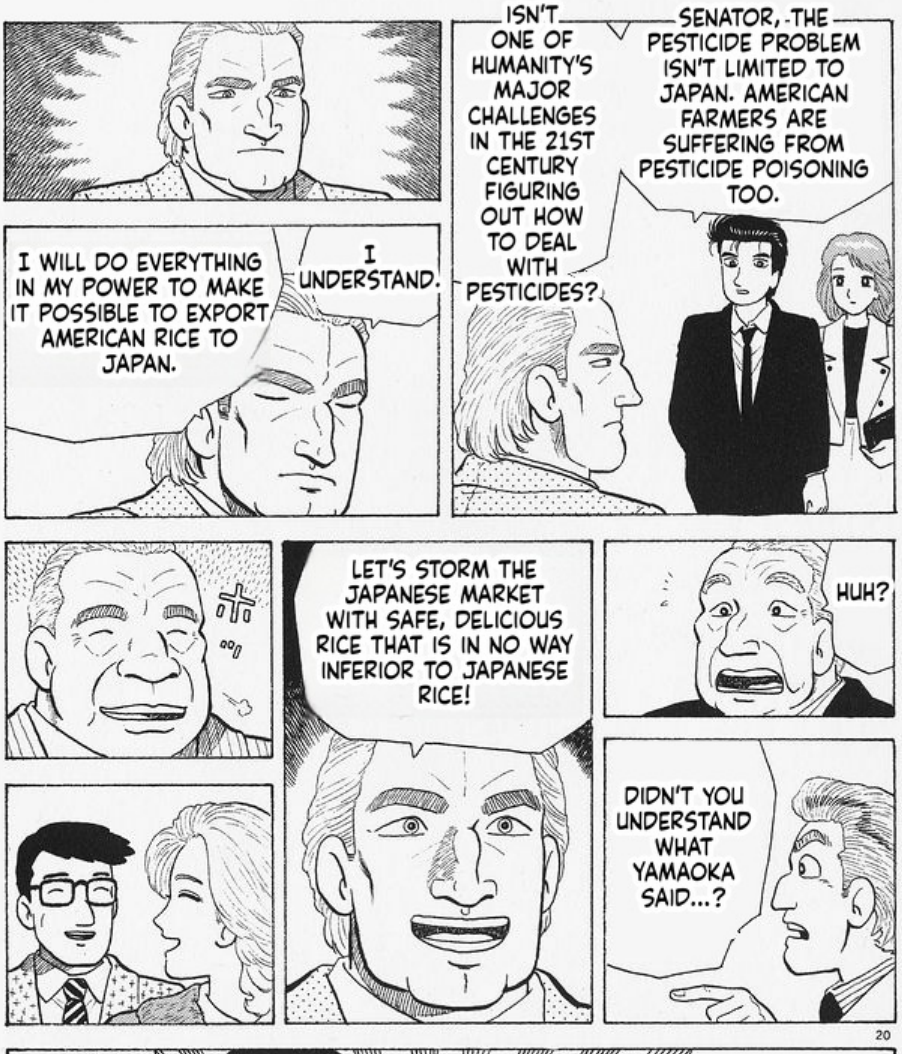
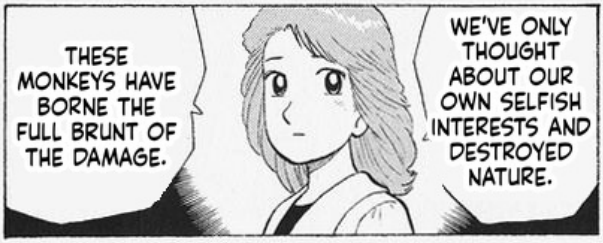
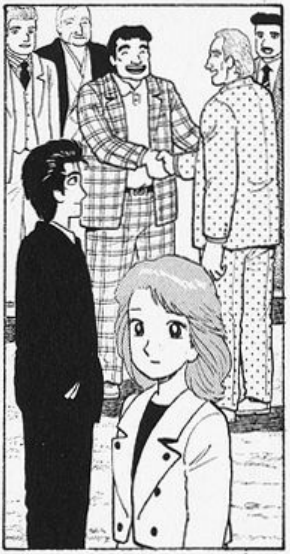

SENATOR, THE PESTICIDE PROBLEM ISN'T LIMITED TO JAPAN. AMERICAN FARMERS ARE SUFFERING FROM PESTICIDE POISONING TOO.
ISN'T ONE OF HUMANITY'S MAJOR CHALLENGES IN THE 21ST CENTURY FIGURING OUT HOW TO DEAL WITH PESTICIDES?
I UNDERSTAND.
I WILL DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO EXPORT AMERICAN RICE TO JAPAN.
HUH?
LET'S STORM THE JAPANESE MARKET WITH SAFE, DELICIOUS RICE THAT IS IN NO WAY INFERIOR TO JAPANESE RICE!
DIDN'T YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT YAMAOKA SAID...?

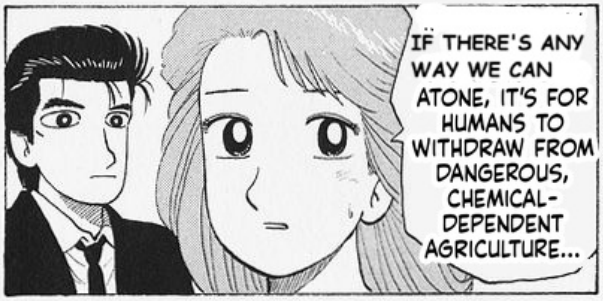
20

NOT A SINGLE GRAIN WILL LOSE! IT'S A SHOWDOWN!!
VERY WELL, SENATOR. WE'LL MEET AMERICA'S RICE HEAD-ON WITH SAFE, DELICIOUS RICE OF OUR OWN.

LET'S MAKE IT A FAIR FIGHT!
ゲッ
IT'S ON!


THESE MONKEYS HAVE BORNE THE FULL BRUNT OF THE DAMAGE.
WE'VE ONLY THOUGHT ABOUT OUR OWN SELFISH INTERESTS AND DESTROYED NATURE.




IF THERE'S ANY WAY WE CAN ATONE, IT'S FOR HUMANS TO WITHDRAW FROM DANGEROUS, CHEMICAL-DEPENDENT AGRICULTURE...

21

EVEN IF JAPAN ENDS UP LIFTING ITS BAN ON RICE IMPORTS...

WE, THE MINJITO PARTY, PLEDGE TO CARRY OUT THESE THREE PILLARS AT THE RISK OF OUR LIVES.
RELIEVING RICE FARMERS, ENSURING THE SAFETY OF RICE, AND PRESERVING THE TRADITIONS OF RICE FARMING...

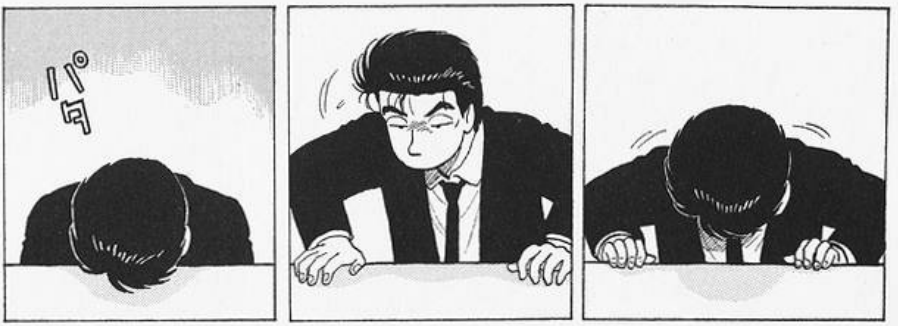
COME ON, LET'S GO GET LUNCH.
I'M STARVING.

DO YOUR BEST, KAKUMARU!

22

FROM THERE ON, IT ALL DEPENDS ON THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS.

HM?
NO! MR. YAMAOKA, YOU SHOULD EAT RICE COVERED IN PLENTY OF PESTICIDES.
GIVE ME SOME, TOO.
I TRACKED DOWN A WONDERFUL, CONSCIENTIOUS RICE FARMER AND GOT THIS RICE FROM HIM.
WE'RE GOING TO EAT RICE BALLS, SO YOU CAN GO ON AHEAD, MR. YAMAOKA.
WHY?
23
ぬおお～
THE PESTICIDES WILL KILL THE SLACKER GERMS INSIDE YOU, MR. YAMAOKA.
REFERENCE PHOTOS / SEIGEN OTAKA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